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The effect of time compression upon character in Shakespeare's tragedies

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THE EFFECT OF TIME COMPRESSION UPON CHARACTER IN SHAKESPEARE'S TRAGEDIES

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INTRODUCTION

The many interpretations and analyses of Shakespeare's plays have led, through studies of Shakespeare's sources, to comparisons between his plots and characters and those of his predecessors, incident for incident, and trait for trait. These comparisons have yielded up numerous scholastic opinions as to what facet of Shakespeare's genius is responsible for the excellence of the characters he produced. There are those opinions which hold that Shakespeare was merely a clever borrower, an epicurean, as it were, daintily picking and choosing from the dramatic viands ready to his hand. Other opinions, though granting that Shakespeare was a borrower in "the grand manner," maintain that his borrowings are of little significance, but that the essence of the excellence he produced in his characters is due to his almost instinctive recognition of, and submission to, the demands of action and plot, in adapting these borrowings to the dramatic medium. A third group of scholars and critics, equally adamant in their claims, hold the opinion that the borrowings and adaptations are of relative insignificance in comparison with Shakespeare's ability to "cut" a character "out of whole cloth"; that is, that Shakespeare's characters are quantitatively more original than borrowed or adapted. The

consensus justifiably divides the credit among these three possibilities.

Taking these possibilities into consideration, however, it is the purpose of this study to add one more factor to the above consensus, the factor of Shakespeare's time compression. Granting the fact that Shakespeare borrowed and then adapted his borrowings by means of extended dialogue and diminished narrative to the stage, and granting the fact that he frequently cut characters "out of whole cloth," there still remains a hitherto inexplicable intensity or flavor in his characterization which cannot be attributed to any of the above explanations. Could this "flavor" be attributed in cases of his borrowings to Shakespeare's shortening of the element of time consumption? The question is a purely academic one but one that has been, nevertheless, neglected. It is the problem of this study to investigate the extent of the changes brought about in Shakespeare's characters which are due to his compression of the periods of time consumed by the action of the stories from which he drew his plots.

Critics of Shakespeare have touched upon the effect of such a telescopic treatment of this element of time, but never in relation to characterization alone. The time element has been treated usually in connection

with dramatic convenience (fitting a plot into a two-and-one-half-hour stage presentation), emphasis of dramatic action, omission of narrative, and heightening of contrast in mood and action. Heretofore the effect of Shakespeare's compression of the time lapse of his sources upon his characterization has been touched upon only incidentally and in relation to the other dramatic necessities already mentioned.

It is the purpose of this study to point out, by means of specific comparisons of the time allowance and characters in Shakespeare's tragedies and the time allowance and the characters in his sources for those plays, that many of the differences between Shakespeare's characters and those of his sources are due to the difference in lapse of time.

Before further discussion, perhaps it would be well to consider for a moment just exactly what time compression is. In this study the word compression is used interchangeably with "foreshortening" or "telescoping" to denote a shortening of the period of time during which the stories took place, retaining, however, the connotative value of perspective; that is, the all-over general sequence of events, including the maturation of the struggle, the climax, and the outcome, against the same general background of period and events.

In comparing the Shakespearean plays with their sources, one question becomes apparent: What about omission? Is omission of events time compression? If not, then what is true time compression? Finding the answers to these questions is difficult, to say the least. If events are omitted, naturally the time they would have consumed by their happenings would be eliminated. During these happenings, certain traits of character are revealed or implied. Therefore, when the happenings are eliminated, the effect is not only one of diminished passage of time, but also one of intensified or diluted characterization. The only guide used was that of general effect. If in my opinion omitted incidents were greatly time consuming or highly dramatic, I considered them as compressive of time. I ignored such omissions of time as were insignificant insofar as the sustained dramatic action of the play at hand was concerned. Therefore, time compression in this study embraces the effects wrought by Shakespeare's tendency to ignore extraneous material which did not fall within the pattern of his dramatic purpose.

Because the sources of Shakespeare are a vital part of this study, I have of necessity eliminated those tragedies the sources of which are either equivocable or unverifiable. It is essential to the nature of this study

that the Shakespearean tragedies with which I deal be directly evolved from ascertainable sources. For without such direct relationship between source and play no definitive statement can be made as to change or shift in characterization. Any statement concerning plays of uncertain source would be purely hypothetical, and consequently not valid in a study of this nature.

Therefore I shall deal with only those tragedies the sources of which can be ascertained. They are as follows: Romeo and Juliet, Julius Caesar, Antony and Cleopatra, and Coriolanus.

In accordance with the above limitation I have excluded from this study the following tragedies:

1. Titus Andronicus. Critics and researchers have failed to dispel the mists of time surrounding the sources of this play. There are not only those who dispute various suggestions as to sources, but also those who dispute the actual authenticity of this play as Shakespearean.

Boas has the following comment:

> English commentators, however, almost without exception, have refused to recognize the play as genuinely Shakespearean, and have at most admitted that it was touched up by the poet.[1]

The play is truly in the tradition of the tragedy of blood, a favorite theme in the time of Shakespeare, a theme apart from psychological drama, a theme used by other Elizabethan dramatists such as Kyd and Marlowe, a

theme directly deriving from the Senecan tradition. This fact in itself need not have deterred me from treating the play in this study, except that Shakespeare did very little to interpret the traditional tragedy of blood in Titus Andronicus as he did in Hamlet.

The problem of the source of the plot itself now presents itself. Various critics and editors have been able to trace certain elements of the story to various possible predecessors. However, these tracings have been merely conjectural. Because of the variety of these possible sources and the fact that they consist of independent themes of thought rather than connected themes contributing to a single outcome of measurable influence, one can reach no standard for comparison. In effect, a study of the sources for this play would constitute in itself a Master's thesis. However, following are a few of the critical remarks regarding the origin of the story of Titus Andronicus and some conjectures as to Shakespeare's possible source for his play.

Holzknecht says:

> This legend of an imaginary Roman emperor had some currency in Shakespeare's England, but the immediate source of his play, which was also the basis of a Dutch and two German versions, is lost. The revenge theme, involving the 'horrid banquet,' is Senecan; it occurs in the story of Atreus in Seneca's

Thyestes and also in that of Philomela in Ovid's Metamorphoses, retold in several Elizabethan story collections. The sacrifice of the captive to appease the shades of the dead (I,i), which is the mainspring of the whole drama of vengeance, also occurs in Seneca's Troades. The story of Aaron the Moor has some similarity to a tale in Bandello's Novelle (1554), and Titus's slaying of Lavinia suggests the story of Virginius and his daughter.[2]

Witherspoon says:

No single and direct source of the story of Titus Andronicus has ever been discovered. It is probable that the play as we have it was based on an older play, but there is no conclusive evidence of the existence of any version, English or foreign, prior to the text that we now have. The plot seems, however, to combine many themes and incidents found in other forms of literature. The story proper is apparently without any historical basis, and is curiously anachronistic in arrangement....

Baildon (Arden Edition) suggests an Oriental origin for the story, in view of its peculiar cruelty and lavish bloodshed, and the presence in it of those two Bashi-bazouks, Chiron and Demetrius. But if the story came from the Orient, it has undergone many modifications in transit....

The different threads of the plot of Titus Andronicus bear striking resemblance to other well-known themes and legends. The author frequently likens Lavinia's fate to that of Philomela, which Ovid's Metamorphoses had made known to England. The cruelty and villainy of Aaron suggest at once the deeds of Barabas and Ithamore in Marlowe's Jew of Malta. There is, furthermore, in Evans's Old Ballads and in Roxburghe Ballads, a poem of about 1570 entitled, 'A Lamentable Ballad of the Tragical End of a Gallant Lord and of his Beautiful Lady, with the untimely death of their children, wickedly performed by a heathen Blackamore, their servant: The like seldom heard before.' The theme of

> the 'heathen blackamore' was very popular. Professor Koeppel (in Englische Studien, 16. 370) points out several other versions of it: a Latin version by Pontano, an adaptation by Bandello in the twenty-first novel of his third book, a French paraphrase by Belleforest in the second volume of his Histoires Tragiques. And there are other versions in other languages.[3]

And so on the controversy rages. Because of the critical weight of the foregoing statements it is evident that the threads of the plot are too numerous and varied to provide a single unified plot for comparison with that of Shakespeare's Titus Andronicus. Probably the whole mystery is best summed up by the following:

TITUS ANDRONICUS:

> This legend of an imaginary Roman emperor had some currency in Shakespeare's England, but the immediate source of his play, which was also the basis of a Dutch and two German versions, is lost.[4]

None of the critics consulted were able to advance even a tenuous theory as to which of the many possible sources was most readily available to Shakespeare's hand.

2. Hamlet. This is perhaps the most controversial of all of Shakespeare's plays, not only in respect to interpretation but also in respect to origin. The full title of the play, according to the Cambridge edition of Shakespeare, is The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark. Because of the title and the locale of the action, the

origin of the legend of the unlucky prince must certainly lie in the legends of Denmark, or at most, Scandinavia.

The editors of the Cambridge edition of Shakespeare state that "the origin of the Hamlet story lies in the obscure regions of Scandinavian legend," and that "it appears that Hamlet (Amlothi) was the hero of a tale as old as the Old English Beowulf, but what his story was like in its ancient form can only be vaguely guessed." They continue:

> The earliest literary account of Hamlet occurs in the Historia Danica (c. 1200) by Saxo Grammaticus, who drew upon tradition and the lost Scandinavian sagas. Saxo's narrative was adapted by Belleforest as one of his Histoires Tragiques (1576). In Belleforest the story lay ready to the hand of a dramatist.[5]

Actually, this is about the only concrete fact as to the origin of the plot that has been unearthed throughout the centuries since Shakespearean scholarship began.

The Variorum fails to yield a consensus as to a definite source, even though the opinions of such eminent critics as Malone, Steevens, Latham, Knight, and Collier are quoted.[6]

However, as has been stated elsewhere in this introduction, because of the nature of this study, the problem has not been so much concerned with the origin of the legends Shakespeare used as it has been with Shakespeare's immediate source. Therefore, even though the stages in

the evolution of the Hamlet legend have been gradually agreed upon by the various critics, the horns of an awkward dilemma poke at the efforts of the student striving to find the version of the play closest to Shakespeare at the time he wrote his play. It would seem that there is a lost play, the whereabouts of which remain to this day an enigma. Nielson and Hill point out the essential features familiar in Shakespeare present in Belleforest. However, upon their recounting of these mutually present features, the difference between the works becomes obvious. In explanation of these they state:

> The indebtedness of Shakespeare, and his originality would be easy to determine if this were all one had to consider, but between Belleforest's story and Shakespeare's drama stands a lost play. To its existence there are several witnesses. Henslowe records a performance on June 11, 1594; Lodge aludes in his Wits Miserie (1596) to 'ye ghost which cried so miserably at ye Theator, like an oister wife, Hamlet, revenge.' But the play dates from the previous decade, for Nashe, in the Preface to Greene's Menaphon (1589), proclaims that 'English Seneca read by candle light yeelds many good sentences ... and if you intreate him faire in a frostie morning, hee will affoord you whole Hamlets, I should say handfuls of Tragicall speeches.' The author of this lost play is unknown, but evidence points to Kyd. It was clearly a play of the Senecan mode, like The Spanish Tragedy, though it may have been by an imitator of Kyd. In any event, it is certain that this lost play had already added to the existent source material the Ghost, probably the play within the play, and the fencing match involving Hamlet's death. Shakespeare must have been indebted to the old play, whatever its content; he may have worked from it directly, though that would presuppose

> that his company owned the 'book,' for there is no evidence that the old play was ever printed.[7]

Some attribute the authorship to Kyd, others to various unknowns. Because of the unexplainable differences between extant previous versions of the legend and Shakespeare's rendition, the consensus has it that Shakespeare's most frequently-referred-to source is missing. The arguments for the existence of this lost play are convincing. In spite of their differences as to the nature of the lost play, critics generally agree that there was a play closer to Shakespeare than the ones now available. This fact, of course, presents a veritable stumbling block in the way of a study such as this. Until it is removed by the discovery of the identity and nature of the lost play, the problem of time compression in Hamlet cannot be intelligently discussed.

3. Othello. The story of this play was apparently taken from an Italian story of which no English translation of Shakespeare's time is known. Alden has the following to say regarding the source:

> The story of this tragedy was taken, apparently, from one of the stories in Geraldi Cinthio's collection called The Hundred Tales (Hecatommithi), an Italian work of 1566. No English version of Shakespeare's time is known. /My italics./[8]

Shakespeare's knowledge of foreign languages has never been established, however, and so the fact that there was

no English version of Cinthio during Shakespeare's time in itself causes a reasonable doubt upon Cinthio as Shakespeare's direct source for Othello. However, Neilson and Thorndike apparently consider a French translation as a possibility, though almost ruling out Italian and Spanish.

> The class of Italian literature with which Shakespeare shows most acquaintance is that of the novelle, though there is no proof that he could read the language. Of modern languages, French was the easiest for an Elizabethan Englishman to acquire, and the French passages and scenes in Henry V make it fairly certain that Shakespeare had a working knowledge of this tongue. Yet, as in the case of Latin, he seems to have preferred a translation to an original when he could find it. /My italics./ .... and the story of the caskets in The Merchant of Venice is found in a form closer to Shakespeare's in the English translation of the Gesta Romanorum than in the Decameron. Thus we cannot conclude that the poet knew this work as a whole. Similarly with Bandello and Cinthio. /My italics./ The plot of Much Ado is found in the former, and is translated by Belleforest into French, but at least one detail seems to come from Ariosto, and here again an intermediary is commonly conjectured. The novel from Cinthio's Hecatommithi which formed the basis of Othello existed in a French translation....
>
> The conclusion with regard to Italian and Spanish, then, seems to be that Shakespeare in his search for plots was aware of the riches of the novelle, but that he found what he wanted as a rule in English or French versions; and that we have no evidence of his knowledge of anything but fiction from these literatures.[9]

Again, in the following, the same possibility of a French translation as Shakespeare's source for the general theme

is considered, and the possibility of an English translation dismissed:

> The plot was taken from Giraldi Cinthio's Hecatommithi (seventh novel of the third decade). A French translation of the Italian was made in 1583-1584, and this Shakespeare may have used. We know of no English translation until years after Shakespeare died. Many details are changed in the play, and the whole story is raised to a far nobler plane. In the original the heroine is beaten to death with a stocking filled with sand; Othello is tortured, but refuses to confess, and later is murdered by his wife's revengeful kinsmen. This crude, bloody, and long-drawn-out story is in striking contrast with the masterly ending of the tragedy.[10]

Because of the obvious changes made by Shakespeare, the doubt arises as to whether or not there was an intermediary play of some kind, or at least a lost English translation.

In approaching Othello as one of the plays to be dealt with in this study, I consulted first the Variorum. I found that some fourteen pages were devoted by Furness to the duration of the action in Othello. Within this space Furness goes about establishing the lapse of time to be four days, with an interval of a week between Acts III and IV. He compares this time lapse of Shakespeare to "historical" time lapse, which is to say, the time lapse in Cinthio. If it were possible to associate this passage of time as manifested in Shakespeare with that in a definitive source, the resulting contrast and its effects would be perhaps the

strongest point I could make in this thesis. No tragedy of Shakespeare's offers such a dramatic change in character due to time compression as does the Othello of Shakespeare as compared with the "Othello" of Cinthio's collection. Unfortunately, however, there is no conclusive evidence that Shakespeare used the Hecatommithi, and consequently I reluctantly but necessarily must eliminate Othello from my consideration of the influence upon character of compression of time from source to tragedy. Furness, even though interested in demonstrating the contrast between time lapses of "Othello" of Hecatommithi and Shakespeare's Othello, does not attempt to provide anything but a purely conjectural source for Shakespeare. One could easily become lost in the labyrinth of conjectural opinion, including such critical opinions as those of Klein, Rawdon Brown, C. Elliot Browne, and Pickersgill, none of whom can agree upon a common source.[11]

4. King Lear. This play had to be eliminated from this study because, even though the source of the subordinate plot is clear, the source for the main plot remains still in dispute. Furness writes:

> Of the two tragic stories in Lear, the source from which Shakespeare derived the subordinate one, that of Gloucester, is well known. The extract from Sidney's Arcadia, containing the story of 'the Paphlagonian unkind king,' will be found on p. 386; it was pointed out, as similar to Gloucester's, by our countrywoman,

> MRS. LENNOX, in 1754, and I know of only one commentator, HUNTER, who has questioned, since then, the general belief that it was the original of Shakespeare's secondary plot.
>
> There is some doubt, however, as to the source from which the main plot of Lear is directly derived. The story itself, in its broad outlines of doting paternal kindness repaid with filial ingratitude, and paternal harshness requited with devoted love, is as old as almost any story in English literature. It is told by Geoffrey of Monmouth in his Historia Britonum, by Layamon in his Brut, by Robert of Gloucester, by Fabyon in his Chronicle, by Spenser in his Faery Queene, by Holinshed, by Camden, and it is found in the Mirour for Magistrates, the Gesta Romanorum, in Warner's Albion's England, and I dare say, elsewhere. It is not, however, likely that Shakespeare went to any of the older of these authorities for his materials; We know how fond he was of Holinshed, and unless there were a drama ready to his hand to be remodelled, we should look to Holinshed; and there, indeed, some of the best of modern editors do find the immediate source of Shakespeare's Lear. But I am afraid I cannot agree with them. Holinshed, I think, furnished merely the indirect source of Lear. I think we can approach one step nearer and discern the direct source in the ante-Shakespearean drama of the Chronicle History of King Leir, which HALLIWELL, following MALONE, says was dramatized as early as 1593 or 1594, and is probably the same that Edward White entered in the Stationers' Registers in the latter of these years, and which reappeared as the 'tragecall historie' printed by Simon Stafford in 1605. The author of this old comedy of King Leir undoubtedly drew from the old chroniclers, probably Holinshed; and Shakespeare, I think, drew from him.[12]

As Furness has pointed out, the opinions as to the source of the main plot vary in many respects, and where they do agree, Furness himself disagrees. He considers and rejects

the theories advanced by Malone, Grant White, A. W. Ward, Mrs. Lennox, Bishop Percy, and Klein.[13]

W. J. Craig reviews all of the previously-mentioned source possibilities, but endeavors to make no definite decision as to the most likely, confining himself to pointing out only the various likenesses to Shakespeare's work.[14]

Actually, the following seems best to sum up all of the possibilities advanced by the critics consulted:

> The story of Lear in some form or another had appeared in many writers before Shakespeare. The sources from which he drew chiefly were probably the early accounts by Geoffrey of Monmouth, a composite poem called The Mirrour for Magistrates, Holinshed's Chronicles, Spenser's Faerie Queene, and lastly an old play of King Leir, supposed to be the one acted in 1594. This old play ended happily; Shakespeare first introduced the tragic ending. He also invented Lear's madness, the banishment and disguise of Kent, and the characters of Burgundy and the fool. The underplot he drew from the story of the blind King of Paphlagonia in Arcadia, a long, rambling novel of adventure by Sir Philip Sidney.[15]

Years later the editors of the Cambridge edition of Shakespeare had only the following to offer as to the enigma of Shakespeare's immediate source for King Lear:

> In its remote origins the story of Lear appears to be a variant of the Cinderella tale, widespread in folklore. Attached to the name of Lear, the legend appears in a fully developed form in the pseudo-historical chronicle, Historia Regum Britanniae, by Geoffrey of Monmouth (c. 1135). Thereafter it became an oft-told tale, especially in Tudor days, the most conspicuous versions being those in Holinshed's Chronicle, in

> The First parte of the Mirrour for Magistrates by John Higgins, and in Spenser's Faerie Queene (II.x.27-32). The story had already been dramatized in an anonymous play, The True Chronicle History of King Leir(1605). This play, however, was an old one, having been registered on May 14, 1594 and having been acted, according to Henslowe's records, during the month preceding. It was registered again on May 8, 1605, before its publication in that year as 'diuers and sundry times lately acted.' It has been urged that the old play was belatedly published to take advantage of the success of Shakespeare's play, but it is easier to believe that the printing, or the revival, of the former moved Shakespeare to handle the time-honored story.
>
> Shakespeare owes little to earlier accounts beyond the broad outlines of the traditional story. From Spenser he may have taken the present form of Cordelia's name, which earlier had been Cordeilla or Cordella. From the old play come minor verbal echoes and perhaps the suggestion for the characters of Kent and Oswald. Comparison of Shakespeare's version with its predecessors, however, reveals mainly his distinctive originality.[16]

It is impossible, therefore, because of the disagreement regarding the source used by Shakespeare, to determine the nature or the amount of time compression in King Lear.

5. Macbeth. Very much the same situation exists in Macbeth. According to most critics Holinshed was the source, but the insurmountable obstacle in the path of using Holinshed in a study of this nature is the fact that Shakespeare used more than one tale, forming a composite story of persons, deeds, and situations drawn from widely divergent periods of time, and making additions of his own. Therefore, even though it were possible to trace time compression within

separate instances, the composite nature of the characters and the situations would prohibit tracing any concomitant effect upon the characters. For a summing up of the various opinions as to the fragments used by Shakespeare, Furness is perhaps the most authoritative commentary:

> The historical incidents (if a medley of fable and tradition may be accounted historical) in the tragedy of 'Macbeth' are found in the Scotorum Historiae in HECTOR BOECE, first printed at Paris in 1526. This BOECE, or BOYCE, was the first Principal of King's College, Aberdeen, and his work was translated into the Scotch dialect by JOHN BELLENDEN, archdeacon of Moray, in 1541. Messrs CLARK and WRIGHT say that there is 'reason to think that HOLINSHED consulted this translation....Be this as it may, HOLINSHED is Shakespeare's authority, HECTOR BOECE is HOLINSHED'S, and BOECE follows FORDUN, adding to him, however, very freely.' Although Shakespeare obtained the materials for the plot of this tragedy from HOLINSHED, yet he did not confine himself to the history of 'Macbeth,' for around the murder of Duncan he weaves certain details which are historically connected with the murder of King Duffe, the great-grandfather of Lady Macbeth.[17]

Furness then proceeds to quote the applicable parts of Holinshed and as a means of comparing fiction with fact quotes from Chalmer's Caledonia; in addition to these there are included extracts from Wintownis' Cronykil, a possible source for the weird sisters, along with the opinions of Simrock, Halliwell and Dr. Ritter, each of whom advance more than one possible source, either legendary or quasi-historical, for the various phases of Shake-

speare's composite plot.[18]

Another statement attesting to the multiple source of Macbeth is as follows:

> The plot is borrowed from Holinshed's Historie of Scotland. Most of the material is taken from the part relating to the reigns of Duncan and Macbeth; but other incidents, such as the drugging of the grooms, are from the murder of Duncan's ancestor Duffe, which is described in another part of Holinshed.[19]

Again, the same fact is stated by Boas:

> ...but Shakespere's sole authority was Holinshed's Chronicle. He follows closely the account there given of the reigns of Duncan and Macbeth, though the central episode of the play, the midnight murder of Duncan, is based on Holinshed's earlier narrative of the assassination of King Duffe by Donwald, the governor of his castle, and his wife.[20]

From the above it may be seen that the name of murderer was appended to entirely different persons in the source. This, in conjunction with entirely different motives for the murder and widely separated times, makes any serious attempt at reconstruction of time lapse impossible. This is the inevitable conclusion to which I was led after having consulted the remarks of the various critics who have written on the subject of Shakespeare's immediate sources, a few of whom I have already quoted. All of these learned people have much the same thing to say regarding the composite nature of Shakespeare's plot in more or less detail. Three of these who analyze the relationship between Shakespeare's various situations and those to be found in Holin-

shed are John Matthews Manly,[21] Samuel Thurber, Jr., and R. Adelaide Witham.[22] However, as has been previously stated in this introduction, the fact that such an analysis is available between parts of the drama and parts of the history is of no help in establishing a definite scheme of time lapse in either work for the purposes of comparison. Nothing further could be added after having consulted the comments of such critics and editors as Stopford A. Brooke, Thomas Seccombe and J. W. Allen, William Allan Nielson, Ashley Horace Thorndike, and Edward Arber. (A list of the works of these critics is to be found in the Bibliography of this paper.)

6. Timon of Athens. Shakespeare's possible sources for this play are also manifold. Nielson and Hill, in the introduction to the play in the Cambridge edition of Shakespeare, state that the respective stories of Alcibiades and Timon are not adequately joined, thus leading to doubts about the complete authenticity of the play. According to them, two theories have prevailed, one to the effect that Timon is an adaptation by Shakespeare of a lost play, and the other to the effect that it is an unfinished play of Shakespeare's completed by another hand. However, Nielson and Hill add that even the upholders of these two theories have differed widely among themselves both as to the identity of the original dramatist or the reviser of Shakespeare, and

as to the extent of the non-Shakespearean parts. According to Nielson and Hill, there is yet another view gaining acceptance, namely, that the play as it survives is a Shakespearean "torso, " a play which Shakespeare "hewed" out in the rough and then abandoned. An argument in favor of this view is the space in the Folio which consists of a gap of eight pages and into which Troilus and Cressida fits exactly. Nielson and Hill speculate that when Troilus and Cressida was removed from among the Tragedies for the reasons of ambiguity and copyright difficulties, Timon was substituted. They conjecture that the printing of Timon might not have been originally planned because Shakespeare had not finished it and because it had not been acted.

However, leaving aside all question of a lost play, Nielson and Hill maintain that all there is to find as a primary source of the present drama is in an incidental account in Plutarch's Life of Marcus Antonius. But although Plutarch gives the outlines of Timon's story, he supplies nothing for the part of the action preceding Timon's poverty, except the suggestion contained in the remark that his misanthropy was owing to "the unthankfulness of those he had done good unto, and whom he tooke to be his friends."

The editors of the Cambridge edition go on to state that in Lucian's dialogue of Timon, or the Misanthrope,

however, Shakespeare found other details, such as the saving of a man from debtor's prison, the gift of a dowry, the crowd of flatterers, the discovery of gold in the fields, the visit of a poet because of the rumor of Timon's restoration to wealth, and the delegation from the Senate to plead for Timon's return; indeed, say they, Shakespeare's conception of Timon's character is more definitely foreshadowed in Lucian than in Plutarch. Again, however, the recurring difficulty of translations available to Shakespeare presents itself. Nielson and Hill state that Lucian had not been translated into English in the time of Shakespeare, but that there were versions in Latin, Italian and French. Again the question of Shakespeare's learning must be considered as well as the admission that there is no definite proof of his knowledge of any of these languages. Nielson and Hill then extend their argument for Lucian as a source by a comparison of similar incidents found in both his work and that of Shakespeare.[23]

As may be seen from the above paraphrase, there is in this play also a plural possibility of sources. This fact is borne out by the following opinion:

> The basic legend of Shakespeare's Timon of Athens began in antiquity. Early in the fifth century B. C., Timon's picturesque misanthropy was the theme of Greek comic poets. The hero of The Misanthrope, by Phrynichus, remarks: 'I live like Timon. I have no wife, no servant, I am irritable

and hard to get on with. I never laugh, I never talk, and my opinions are all my own.' From the uncertain realms of casual allusion emerge two later Greek portrayals of the character of Timon: The story of the misanthrope in Plutarch's Life of Antonius, and Lucian's comic dialogue, Timon the Misanthrope.

...It is conceivable that the full possibilities of the Timon legend were brought home to Shakespeare in the very act of composing Antony and Cleopatra....Were proof needed, the epitaphs show Shakespeare's dependence upon Plutarch. They are quoted in juxtaposition, but are contradictory. The inclusion of both instead of the selection of one must be due to inadvertence or misunderstanding on the part of the poet. In fact, the more the passage in Plutarch is studied the more certainly does it appear that this or a later work based upon Plutarch, such as Painter's Palace of Pleasure (1566), is the dynamic or inspirational source of our play.

Nevertheless, certain incidents can be attributed neither to Plutarch nor Painter. Of basic principles and ideas Plutarch is the source; for other episodes and character portraiture the responsibility is elsewhere. It is probable that one such source was an old Elizabethan comedy of Timon of Athens, acted about 1600....But the mock-banquet and the all-sacrificing steward are to be found in the old play and not in Lucian....

The amount of Shakespeare's obligation to Timon the Misanthrope in Lucian's Dialogues has been rather widely disputed. When Shakespeare's play was written there existed no English translation of Lucian's Dialogues. Unless the tale of Shakespeare's Greek is discredited, he cannot be believed conversant with the original. If he was influenced it must have been through existent French or Italian translations. Shakespeare's tragedy includes no passages traceable to Lucian which cannot be as readily ascribed to the old play or another source of later date than Lucian.[24]

Timon of Athens is the last on the list of tragedies eliminated from this study on the grounds of having no definite source or sources. In the following chapters are the results of my study of the effect of Shakespeare's time compression upon the characters in his tragedies for which verifiable sources could be found.

CHAPTER I

ROMEO AND JULIET

Almost without exception critics have agreed upon a long narrative poem, The Tragicall Historye of Romeus and Juliet, written between 1559 and 1562 by Arthur Brooke, an Englishman, as the most likely primary source for Shakespeare's play Romeo and Juliet.[1]

A comparison of the works of Brooke and Shakespeare soon manifests a considerable difference in lapse of time.

In Brooke the story begins before Christmas:

> The weary winter nights restore the Christmas games,
> And now the season doth invite to banquet townish dames.
> The first in Capel's house, the chief of all the kin
> Spar'th for no cost, the wonted use of banquets to begin.[2]

A number of days pass after this, during which Romeo passes Juliet's window.

> In often passing so, his busy eyes he threw,
> That every pane and tooting hole the wily lover knew.[3]

Finally,

> ...She happed to lean one night
> Within her window, and anon the moon did shine so bright
> That she espied her love:[4]

and

...Romeus saw his long desired sight.[5]

The following Saturday, Juliet went to shrift and was married. All of this could have consumed the month of January. Then Brooke stated that their happiness lasted for "a month or twain:"[6] The fateful battle in which Tybalt was slain by Romeo took place "The morrow after Easter day."[7] This would probably have been in April. Juliet mourned over Romeus' banishment for some time before her father forced her to promise to wed Paris on a following Wednesday, which was, as she told the Friar, the 10th of September.[8] On the day of her marriage, Juliet was found in a trance, but meanwhile, Paris was said to have spent many days wooing her. It is rather difficult to reconcile all of these statements and dates, but the significant point is that in Brooke the action does extend over a period of nine months.[9]

In Shakespeare the lovers meet on the night of the Capulet's ball, Sunday; they are wed the next day, Monday, and they pass the night together. They part the following morning, Tuesday. After the parting Juliet is informed that she is to be married to Paris in two days' time. This is, however, changed by her father to the next day, Wednesday. In the meantime the fatal fight between Romeo and Tybalt occurs. Romeo flees. On Wednesday Juliet is found apparently dead and is buried. On Thursday night

Romeo returns to her, and they die together. The time of action in Shakespeare is, therefore, only five days, with the play actually ending on the morning of the sixth.[10]

The stereotyped idea in the mind of the average person when he hears the name "Romeo" is that of an impetuous, hot-blooded, magnanimous, non-reflective young lover. And so Romeo is in Shakespeare. However, if one turns to Shakespeare's source of this character, one finds an altogether different young man. As has been stated before, the difference is largely due to Shakespeare's compression of the time element of the story. By following Romeus and Romeo through the action of their respective vehicles, at the same time keeping in mind the time allotted in each work, the differences in character due to the time compression are evident.

The first occasion involving both Romeo and Romeus common to both works, and in which Shakespeare compressed time, occurs early in the story. After the ball at which Romeus/Romeo meets Juliet and falls in love with her, a tryst is to be arranged. In Brooke, the following is the sequence of events:

> The maid had scarcely yet ended the weary war,
> Kept in her heart by striving thoughts,
> when every shining star
> Had paid his borrowed light, and Phoebus
> spread in skies
> His golden rays, which seemed to say,
> now time it is to rise.

And Romeus had by this forsaken his weary
bed
Where restless he a thousand thoughts had
forged in his head.
And while with ling'ring step by Juliet's
house he passed,
And upwards to her windows high his greedy
eyes did cast,
His love that looked for him there 'gan he
straight espy.
With pleasant cheer each greeted is; she
followeth with her eye
His parting steps, and he oft looketh back
again,
But not so oft as he desires; warely he doth
refrain.
What life were like to love, if dread of
jeopardy
Y-soured not the sweet, if love were free
from jealousy!
But she more sure within, unseen of any wight,
When so he comes, looks after him till he be out
of sight.
In often passing so, his busy eyes he threw,
that every pane and tooting hole the wily
lover knew.[11]

Finally, during his many passings, Romeus discovers a garden which might give him access to his secret love.

And lest the arbours might their secret love
bewray,
He doth keep back his forward foot from passing
there by day;
But when on earth the Night her mantle black
hath spread;
Well armed he walketh forth alone, ne dreadful
foes doth dread.
Whom maketh Love not bold, nay, whom makes he
not blind?
He reaveth danger's dread oft-times out of the
lover's mind.
By night he passeth here, a week or two in vain.[12]

Shakespeare's compression of time would not permit this lengthy dalliance on the part of his lover, and therefore, a new sense of urgency is to be found in his hero's

love. In Shakespeare the lovers part at the ball when Juliet's nurse summons her away from the festivities. Romeo's companions, Benvolio and Mercutio, leave the ball together, seeking out Romeo to accompany them homeward. Following is the scene by the wall of Capulet's orchard:

Enter Romeo, Alone.

Rom. Can I go forward when my heart is here?
Turn back, dull earth, and find thy centre out.

(He climbs the wall, and leaps down within it.)

Enter Benvolio with Mercutio.

Ben. Romeo! my cousin Romeo!

Mer. He is wise;
And, on my life, hath stol'n him home to bed.

Ben. He ran this way, and leap'd this orchard wall.
Call, good Mercutio.

Mer. Nay, I'll conjure too.[13]

Then, of course, follow Mercutio's imitations of the voice of a girl in order to arouse Romeo from his hiding place and generalizations regarding the state of lovers.

Mercutio and Benvolio then leave the scene, giving up the search for Romeo. Scene II opens with Romeo walking away from the wall at which he has been listening to the conversation of his two friends in their endeavor to find him. He advances to the space beneath Juliet's balcony, makes his presence known, and before he leaves he has her promise of marriage.[14] It is true

that Shakespeare's Juliet does "sweetly urge" the amorous "trespass" of Romeo at the ball, but it must not be forgotten that they meet just an hour or so before the balcony scene.

The difference between Romeus and Romeo in this instance is obvious. Romeus stalks Juliet's house for over two weeks before he finds a time in which he dares to approach her. Romeo simply leaves the ball, leaps a wall and procures a promise of marriage not more than two hours after his meeting with his love. Again, it should be remarked in passing that between the ball scene and the balcony scene Juliet does make an unconscious revelation of her love for Romeo, thus smoothing the path for his proposal. However, this is simply another instance in which time compression works its effect upon the character of the heroine. But it is Romeo's precipitousness which stimulates an unconscious revelation of love into a spontaneous promise of marriage. Romeo seems much more impetuous, more careless of consequences, and more urgently in love than Romeus, though both Romeus and Juliet in Brooke are as suddenly smitten. The difference is the result of the compression of time from over two weeks to approximately two hours, in this instance.

Another difference resulting from compression of time is to be found in the fight between Romeus/Romeo and Tybalt.

The reader will remember that the slaying of Tybalt during this fight leads to the banishment of Romeus/Romeo. In Brooke, the fight occurs about a month after the marriage of Romeus and Juliet.

> The summer of their bliss doth last a month
> or twain,
> But winter's blast with speedy foot doth
> bring the fall again.[15]

In Shakespeare, the fight takes place as Romeo returns home from his wedding immediately beforehand. He is drawn into the fight only after Tybalt slays Mercutio under his arm. Before this he will not be drawn into the fray because, through marriage, Tybalt has just become his cousin.

> Rom. This gentleman, The Prince's near ally,
> My very friend, hath got this mortal hurt
> In my behalf; my reputation stain'd
> With Tybalt's slander, -- Tybalt, that an hour
> Hath been my cousin! O sweet Juliet,
> Thy beauty hath made me effeminate
> And in my temper soft'ned valour's steel.[16]

Even now Romeo seems still reluctant to fight and is without bloodthirst. Nothing but the death of his friend could make him forget the proximity of his wedding, the softness of the scene from which he has just come. He is a victorious lover who has just gained the dearest prize necessary to his happiness. Not so in Brooke. Romeus has been married for a month or more. He is simply out walking with his friends, probably by now, through custom, used to being parted from his love at least for a while. He leaps into the fray taking place in the street between the Capulets

and the Montagues, and like Romeo, with the intention of parting them. However, unlike Romeo, he allows himself to be drawn into battle by mere insults, which Romeo, in Shakespeare, withstands. Tybalt's insulting begins thus:

> 'No, coward, traitor boy,' quoth he,
> 'straightway I mind to try,
> Whether thy sugared talk, and tongue so
> smoothly filed,
> Against the force of this my sword shall
> serve thee for a shield.'
> And then at Romeus' head a blow he strake
> so hard,
> That might have clove him to the brain
> but for his cunning ward.
> It was but lent to him that could repay
> again,
> And give him death for interest, a well
> forborne gain.[17]

This is all that is necessary, and Romeus wades into the fray. Brooke describes him thus:

> Right as a forest boar, that loged in the
> thick,
> Pinched with dog, or else with spear y-picked
> to the quick,
> His bristles stiff upright upon his neck doth
> set,
> And in his foamy mouth his sharp and crooked
> tusks doth whet;
> Or as a lion wild that rampeth in his rage,
> His whelps bereft, whose fury can no weaker
> beast asuage;
> So seemed Romeus in every other's sight.[18]

The comparison is clear. Romeo, in Shakespeare, goes about the killing reluctantly, with a depressing sense of obligation. Romeus, in Brooke, charges into the fight as a "forest boar," purely because of empty insults. Another difference is here evident, due to the compression of time.

In Brooke the lovers spend many nights together. In Shakespeare they are allotted but one night in which to express a lifetime of love. This has its effects upon their characters in that their lovemaking is more immediate, more unashamedly wholesome. The beautiful lyric outbursts we associate with them are a consequence of this. In Shakespeare, in spite of the fact that the wedding night follows Romeo's slaying of Tybalt, little mention of the catastrophe is made by the lovers. Their utterances are pure lyricism, for the most part, and only incidental references are made to the slaying and its consequences. In Brooke, on the other hand, the lovers spend the night lamenting the harshness of fate, and any lovemaking is purely secondary.

> But on his breast her head doth joyless
> Juliet lay,
> And on her slender neck his chin doth
> ruthful Romeus stay.
> Their scalding sighs ascend, and by
> their cheeks down fall
> Their trickling tears, as crystal clear,
> but bitterer far than gall.[19]

Then Romeus treats Juliet to a dissertation on the vagaries of fortune and their share thereof. They commiserate.

Compare this with Shakespeare:

> Rom. I must be gone and live, or stay and die.
>
> Jul. Yond light is not day-light, I know it, I;
> It is some meteor that the sun exhales
> To be to thee this night a torch bearer
> And light thy way to Mantua;
> Therefore stay yet; thou need'st not to be gone.

Rom. Let me be ta'en, let me be put to death;
I am content, so thou will have it so...

...I have more care to stay than will to go.
Come, death, and welcome! Juliet wills it so.
How is't, my soul? Let's talk; it is not day.

Jul. It is, it is! Hie hence, be gone, away![20]

And so it may be seen, that still in the spell of their first night together the lovers find themselves able to joke, almost, at the thought of death. Never, at this point, does it occur to them to take themselves as seriously as do the lovers of Brooke. They are in dead seriousness, but they are able to ignore the future for the present moment; they are able to joke in their use of everyday banter, to laugh in the face of the future, because they have newly arisen from the joys of the wedding bed. They have just achieved their most desired bliss and do not therefore fear outside challenge. In Brooke, the desired bliss is achieved long before Romeus' banishment. Therefore, the time may well be given over to commiseration. The lovemaking is no longer new. The couple involved is comparatively experienced in married life. The effect is not nearly as heroic as that of a pair of lovers just joined.

Another point to be remarked is that Brooke describes almost the whole of the first night the lovers are together, their playful differences and settlings thereof, their artifices, and the like. Shakespeare does not. He makes clear Romeo's access to Juliet's chamber, and that is all.

The next glimpse of the lovers is on the morning after the wedding night, when Romeo takes leave of Juliet, as recorded in the quotation above. This fact allows Shakespeare's lovers to retain a certain virginal quality not found in those of Brooke. They remain, therefore, probably more sympathetic than Brooke's lovers because of their very inexperience and consequent reliance upon instinct alone.

As the action of the plot gathers to its climax, Shakespeare's Romeo undergoes a subtle change, while Brooke's hero does not. Both Romeus and Romeo hear of the supposed death of Juliet from their servants. However, in Shakespeare, Romeo meets his servant in the street. He receives the news of him. He orders his servant to procure horses for the trip to Verona. He knows already of an apothecary who will sell him poison. He purchases it and sets out immediately for his reunion with his purportedly dead love. In Brooke, Romeus is sought out in his room by his news-bearing servant. He orders the servant to stay in the room. He leaves. He roams the streets for some time, bemoaning his ill luck and casting about for easement. He stumbles upon the shop of an apothecary whom he has never seen before. Then, and only then, does the idea of taking poison occur to him. He returns to the room in which his servant awaits him, after having taken

the time to order horses himself.

Here again Shakespeare's telescoping of time has its effect upon the hero's character, this time producing him as a man of action and immediate decision. Shakespeare's Romeo, in his stress, pulls out of his experience the remembrance of an apothecary. His man stands before him and is immediately despatched. No time is wasted on conjecture or self pity. There is no indecision. Shakespeare's Romeo, before this point, is a lad, a mere stripling, in love to the exclusion of even fear and to the slight of even honor. In an instant he has matured. In Brooke, in spite of his blow, Romeus remains the same procrastinating, self-bewailing, garrulous pawn of chance he was before. It is at this point, in Shakespeare, that Romeo takes the reins in his own hands.

The degrees of admirableness of the two Juliets probably separate at the point in which Capulet begins seriously to press his desires for his daughter's marriage to County Paris. Incidentally, in Brooke, Juliet is promised to Paris after her meeting with Romeo, and in Shakespeare, before. However, in Shakespeare, Juliet's first conscious contact with adverse fate is on the morning after her wedding. The following events occur all during that morning: Romeo's departure, Capulet's insistence on her wedding the next morning with Paris, her mother's concurrence in her

father's desires, and her decision to see the Friar in search of relief in the form of death or whatever course her confessor can devise. The occurrence of all of these events simultaneously is due, of course, to Shakespeare's compression of time. Juliet's decision is immediate, revealing her as a person able to receive successive blows of fate and, under these blows, possessed of sufficient presence of mind to devise a course of action, no matter how extreme. Her single-mindedness is brought into relief against the background of intensified persecution. The expanse of time allowed by Brooke, for the same events, portrays his heroine as a far less immediate type of person, giving herself over to self-pity and tirades against fate. She is more devious than Shakespeare's Juliet, however, as exemplified by her attitude toward Paris.

Both heroines devise means of access to Friar Laurence. In Shakespeare, Juliet meets Paris in the Friar's garden but once. Reeling beneath the morning's successive blows, Juliet adopts as defence the only resource left her, a perfectly feminine resource, that of flirtatiousness.

Par. Happily met, my lady and my wife!

Jul. That may be, sir, when I may be a wife.

Par. That may be must be, love, on Thursday next.

Jul. What must be shall be.

Fri. L. That's a certain text.

Par. Come you to make confession to this father?

Jul. To answer that, I should confess to you.

Par. Do not deny to him that you love me.

Jul. I will confess to you that I love him.[21]

And on the colloquy goes, until Juliet is finally kissed by Paris, and in awakened frenzy bids the Friar:

> O, shut the door! and when thou hast done so,
> Come weep with me, past hope, past care, past help![22]

As may be noted, Juliet's replies to Paris are idle, non-thinking, automatic almost. Only when the verbal duel becomes lengthy and leads to a physical demonstration on the part of Paris does Juliet reveal her anguish and turn to the Friar for relief. He has remained standing beside her during the interchange, undeceived by her lightness, as is evidenced by his address of her as "pensive daughter."

In Brooke, much time is allowed to elapse between Juliet's decision and her death, and many meetings with Paris occur: in fact, Brooke refers to Juliet as "wily wench," allowing Paris to woo her several days after the banishment of Romeus.

> That ere the County did out of her sight
> depart,
> So secretly unwares to him she stale away
> his heart,
> That of his life and death the wily wench
> had power,
> And now his longing heart thinks long for
> their appointed hour,
> The wedlock knot to knit soon up, and haste
> the marriage day.

> The wooer hath passed forth the first day
> in this sort,
> And many other more than this in pleasure
> and disport.[23]

It may be seen, in comparison with the above-described girl, that Shakespeare's Juliet is a flirt for only the moment, soon growing tired of the banter. It is unthinkable that she could have prolonged the flirtatious attitude for over two or three minutes after the impact of the misfortunes of the morning which followed upon the heels of her greatest bliss -- her wedding night with Romeo. Brooke's heroine, as may be seen, by virtue of her greater time allotment yields to dalliance and downright coquetry.

Once inside the Friar's cell for the apparent purpose of being confessed, Juliet, in Shakespeare, quickly apprises the Friar of her situation. There is not much for her to tell him because he has already heard of her impending wedding to Paris from Paris himself.

> Fri. O Juliet, I already know thy grief;
> It strains me past the compass of my wits.
> I hear thou must, and nothing may prorogue it,
> On Thursday next be married to this County.
>
> Jul. Tell me not, friar, that thou hear'st
> of this,
> Unless thou tell me how I may prevent it.
> If, in thy wisdom, thou canst give no help,
> Do thou but call my resolution wise,
> And with this knife I'll help it presently.[24]

In Brooke, however, Juliet pours out the whole of her grief to the Friar, relating her miseries in sequence. Her long confession is a tirade against the fates, punctuated by beatings of the breast and tearings of the hair:

When on her tender knees the dainty lady
kneels,
In mind to pour forth all the grief that in-
wardly she feels,
With sighs and salted tears her shriving
doth begin,
For she of heaped sorrows hath to speak, and
not of sin.
Her voice with piteous plaint was made already
hoarse,
And hasty sobs, when she would speak, brake off
her words perforce.
But as she may, piece-meal, she poureth in his
lap
The marriage news, a mischief new, prepared by
mishap,
Her parents' promise erst to County Paris past,
Her father's threats she telleth him, and thus
concludes at last:
'Once was I wedded well, ne will I wed again;
For since I know I may not be the wedded wife
of twain,
For I am bound to have one God, one faith, one
make,
My purpose is as soon as I shall hence my
journey take,
With these two hands which joined unto the
Heavens I stretch,
The hasty death which I desire, unto myself to
reach.
This day, O Romeus, this day thy woeful wife
Will bring the end of all her cares by ending
careful life.
So my departed sprite shall witness to
the sky,
And eke my blood unto the earth bear
record, how that I
Have kept my faith unbroke, steadfast to my
friend.[25]

Because of Shakespeare's telescoping of the time, his Juliet has not time for self-pity and apostrophes to the heavens and posterity. She is intent upon an immediate solution because her wedding is set for the next morning.

In Brooke the wedding is not to occur for several

days, and his Juliet has time to reflect upon the witnessing effects of her spirit and blood to heaven and earth, Romeo's reaction to it all, and the reputation she will leave behind because of her unbroken faith and steadfastness in love. Shakespeare's Juliet, like Shakespeare's Romeo, is a far more determined and quick-acting character. She seems, all in all, to be far less neurotic than Brooke's heroine, and older, in spite of the fact that she is two years younger chronologically.

As has been discussed under the section at the beginning of this chapter, both Shakespeare's lovers seem to be more frank in their lovemaking. In Brooke, at the ball Juliet runs the gamut of self-conscious hand-holding, "changing hue from pale to red to pale, and so from pale anew." Romeus loses his tongue, and when he finds it again, his speech is full of poetic conceits.[26] In Shakespeare, there is some play on words, but the sequence ends in a kiss, urged first by Romeo, and then enticed by Juliet.

The next act opens with Romeo beneath Juliet's balcony, with the results discussed previously. In Brooke, however, during the long delay between their first and second meetings, the lovers berate themselves, showing somewhat of a mutual distrust of each other and of fate:

> So hath he learned her name, and know'th
> she is no geast,
> Her father was a Capulet, and master of
> the feast.

Thus hath his foe in choice to give him
life or death,
That scarcely can his woeful breast keep
in the lively breath.
Wherefore with piteous plaint fierce For-
tune doth he blame,
That his ruth and wretched plight doth
seek her laughing game.
Whose ease and freedom hath exiled out
of his youthful breast.[27]

Thus danger's dread and love within the
maiden fought:
The fight was fierce, continuing long by
their contrary thought.
Then standeth doubtful what to do, lost,
overpressed with woe.
How so her fancies cease, her tears did
never blin,
With heavy cheer and wringed hands thus
doth her plaint begin:
'Ah, silly fool,' quoth she, 'y-caught
in subtle snare!
Ah, wretched wench, bewrapt in woe! Ah,
caitiff, clad with care!
Whence come these wand'ring thoughts to
thy unconstant breast?
By straying thus from reason's law, that
reave thy wonted rest.
What if his subtle brain to feign have
taught his tongue,
And so the snake that lurks in grass thy
tender heart hath stund?
What if with friendly speech the traitor
lie in wait?
As oft the poisoned hook is hid, wrapt in
the pleasant bait?
Oft under cloak of truth hath Falsehood
served her lust;
And turned their honour into shame, that
did slightly trust.
What, was not Dido so, a crowned queen, de-
famed?
And eke, for such a heinous crime, have men
not Theseus blamed?
A thousand stories more, to teach me to be-
ware,
In Boccace and in Ovid's books too plainly
written are.

> Perhaps, the great revenge he cannot work
> by strength,
> By subtle sleight, my honour stained, he
> hopes to work at length.[28]

In Shakespeare there is no time for this sort of masochism. Upon establishing Juliet's identity, Romeo utters simply:

> O dear account! my life is my foe's debt.[29] Is she a Capulet?

And straightway, he heads for Juliet's balcony. Juliet remarks:

> My only love sprung from my only hate!
> Too early seen unknown, and known too late!
> Prodigious birth of love it is to me
> That I must love a loathed enemy.

And when the Nurse asks, "What's this? what's this?" Juliet replies:

> Of one I danc'd withal.[30] A rhyme I learn'd even now

Because their next meeting is but a short time after this, probably less than an hour, they have no time for the self-commiseration in which the lovers of Brooke indulge themselves, thus giving the impression of greater frankness, urgency, and ingenuousness. The little reference made to their family vendetta is light and characterized by play on words. They are too intent upon each other and the import of their love to dwell at any length upon anything else, even impending disaster. At this moment they live only in their love. There is no thought, as in Brooke, given to consequences or the motives of either lover.

Similarly, as has been previously stated, upon the occasion of their last meeting before Romeo goes into banishment, a little time is allowed by Shakespeare, but not enough to permit much bewailing of their misfortune. All of their emotions are embodied in their supreme love for one another; their single-mindedness and touching whistling-in-the-dark type of bravado remain intact.

There are a few minor differences between the two Juliets which are at least partially owing to compression of time. For instance, in Shakespeare, when Juliet procures the drug from the Friar, she knows she must use it that night in order to foil her marriage to Paris in the morning. Brooke's Juliet takes the drug, knowing it will not be necessary to use it for several days. It would probably not be stretching a point too far to remark that it takes much more bravery to contemplate the swallowing of a dangerous drug and burial alive within hours than it does to contemplate the same action at least a week hence, spending the interim, perhaps, in hope that an alternative might present itself, and diverting the mind in dalliance with a not unattractive suitor.

Another difference worthy of notice in passing is the trickiness of Brooke's heroine in comparison with Shakespeare's. For instance, after procuring the potion from the Friar, both Juliets dissemble before their parents,

and Juliet, in Shakespeare, unavoidably deceives her nurse because she is standing with her parents at the time. In Brooke, the Nurse is not present when Juliet dissembles in a show of filial obedience regarding the forthcoming marriage to Paris. Instead, after deceiving her parents, Juliet ascends to her chamber, comes upon her waiting nurse, and repeats the whole performance as though she hadn't gone through the same thing before. Shakespeare solves his need for compression of time by having his nurse present at the first performance , at the same time eliminating this deviousness on the part of his heroine. In fact, Brooke's Juliet goes out of her way, it seems, to praise Paris to both her parents and her old nurse. The hoodwinking of the garrulous but loving old Nurse seems somehow more cruel in Brooke because of this unnecessary repetition.

The last point to be mentioned here regarding the differences between the Juliet of the play and the Juliet of the poem is evident in a comparison of the death scenes. Once again the heroine of Shakespeare demonstrates her quickly decisive manner when she rouses from her death-like sleep to find her husband dead, and almost completely without expressions of self-pity, regret or fear, kills herself, accomplishing in death her single-minded purpose of being with Romeo. Even in this sad exigency, her

bantering tone is brief and completely devoid of rhetoric, thus rendering her far more sympathetic because of the earthiness of her language, with its deadly shock and hurt beneath. Grief when simply expressed is at its most effective height, especially in one so young. The effect is again to make Shakespeare's Juliet seem the more self-contained, mature, of the two heroines.

> Jul. Go, get thee hence, for I will not away.
> What's here? A cup, clos'd in my true love's hand?
> Poison, I see, hath been his timeless end.
> O churl! drunk all, and left no friendly drop
> To help me after? I will kiss thy lips;
> Haply some poison yet doth hang on them
> To make me die with a restorative.
> Thy lips are warm.
>
> Enter Watch, with the Page of Paris.
>
> (1) Watch. Lead, boy; which way?
>
> Jul. Yea, noise? Then I'll be brief.
> O happy dagger! (Snatching Romeo's dagger.)
> This is thy sheath (Stabs herself); there rust, and let me die.[31]

Compare this with Brooke's heroine's exit:

> But lo, as soon as she had cast her ruthful eye
> On Romeus' face, that pale and wan fast by her side did lie,
> Straightway she did unstop the conduits of her tears,
> And out they gush; -- with cruel hand she tare her golden hairs.
> But when she neither could her swelling sorrow 'sauge
> Ne yet her tender heart abide her sickness' furious rage,

Fall'n on his corpse she lay, long panting on
his face,
And then with all her force and strength the
dead corpse did embrace.
As though with sighs, with sobs, with force,
and busy pain
She would him raise, and him restore from
death to life again:
A thousand times she kissed his mouth, as
cold as stone,
And it unkissed again as oft; then 'gan she
thus to moan:
'Ah, pleasant prop of all my thoughts, ah
only ground
Of all the sweet delights that yet in all
my life I found,
Did such assured trust within thy heart
repose,
That in this place and at this time, thy
churchyard thou hast chose
Betwixt the arms of me, thy perfect-loving
make?
And thus by means of me to end thy life, and
for my sake?
Even in the flow'ring of thy youth, when un-
to thee
Thy life most dear, as to the most, and
pleasant ought to be,
How could this tender corpse withstand the
cruel fight
Of furious Death, that wonts to fray the
stoutest with his sight?
How could thy dainty youth agree with
willing heart,
In this so foul-infected place to dwell,
where now thou art?
Where spiteful Fortune hath appointed thee
to be
The dainty food of greedy worms, unworthy,
sure of thee.
Alas, alas, what needed now anew
My wonted sorrows, doubled twice, again thus
to renew?
Which both the time and eke my patient long
abode
Should now at length have quenched quite, and
under foot have trode?
Ah, wretch and caitive that I am, even when I
thought

> To find my painful passion's salve, I missed
> the thing I sought;
> And to my mortal harm the fatal knife I ground,
> That gave to me so deep, so wide, so cruel deadly
> wound!
> Ah thou, most fortunate and most unhappy tomb!
> For thou shalt bear, from age to age, witness
> in time to come
> Of the most perfect league betwixt a pair of
> lovers,
> That were the most unfortunate and fortunate of
> others,
> Receive the latter sigh, receive the latter
> pang,
> Of the most cruel of cruel slaves that wrath
> and death aye wrang.[32]

By this time the Friar has left the tomb, and Juliet is left to continue her moan. She does, however, decide upon the dagger, but just as one believes her end is in sight, she breaks into speech again:

> 'O welcome Death,' quoth she, 'end of un-
> happiness,
> That also art beginning of assured happiness,
> Fear not to dart me now, thy stripe no longer
> stay,
> Prolong no longer now my life, I hate this
> long delay;[33]

After twelve more rhetorical lines in which she commends her spirit to Romeus, Juliet plunges the dagger through her heart. Of course, if this lengthy sort of monologue had been staged in the Elizabethan theater, or any other for that matter, the audience would probably have fled along with the Friar and his servant. However, the effect of this diatribe on the character of the speaker is just about as obvious. The character of Juliet at this point

in Brooke becomes abnormal, with unsavory implications of masochism, necrophilia and morbid preoccupation with the wormy fate of a dead body in a tomb. Shakespeare's time compression is greatly responsible for the elimination of these elements from the character of his heroine. Brooke's heroine is almost maniacal in the form of her grief, and yet inconsistent in her concern over the legendary possibilities in time to come of the deaths of herself and her lover. Again, Shakespeare's Juliet is too intent upon her desire to join Romeo to give thought to anything else, just as she is during their love scenes. She is, in Shakespeare, a clean-minded, forthright girl in love, taking the quickest route to her longed-for rendezvous, a person mature enough to accept without qualms or whinings the responsibility for her mistakes, if such she would admit them to be. She never swerves from her path, but in her single-mindedness achieves her goal.

In Brooke, Friar Laurence is somewhat of a windbag. In Shakespeare, he is not, of course, because of the compression of time. In Brooke, the first evidence of this trait is manifested on the occasion of his marriage of Romeus and Juliet. He takes the occasion to "preach" to the young couple about their obligations, even though the occasion of their marriage is secret and against the wishes of their parents. He is actually pompous:

'Fair lady Juliet, my ghostly daughter
dear,
As far as I of Romeus learn, who by you standeth
here,
Twixt you it is agreed, that you shall be his
wife,
And he your spouse in steady truth, till death
shall end your life.
Are you both fully bent to keep this great
behest?'
And both lovers said, it was their only
heart's request.
When he did see their minds in links of love
so fast,
When in praise of wedlock's state some
skilful talk was past,
His duty eke by ghostly talk the youthful
husband knew;
What love and honour he doth owe, and
debt that he must pay.[34]

Shakespeare could not spare the time to his Friar for these promptings upon the stage. In fact, the wedding is not seen by the audience.

Perhaps it would be well to discuss the next time in which this garrulousness is obvious, even though it does not follow next in the play. This is after the death scene in the last act. In both works, Brooke's and Shakespeare's, the Friar is the logical one to explain to the astounded parents and city officials the meaning of the tragedy. In Shakespeare, Friar Laurence says, "I will be brief," and he is.[35] His speech consumes merely forty lines, summing up the whole tragedy. In Brooke, the Friar is another person entirely. His explanation consists of one hundred and forty lines of

sheer narrative. His beginning is indicative of his ending:

> My lords, there is not one among you, set together,
> So that, affection set aside, by wisdom he consider
> My former passed life, and this my extreme age...[36]

In Shakespeare, Laurence does not have enough time to speak so much of himself. The greater part of Brooke's Laurence's speech is spent in vindication of himself, not in telling the story of the mishap. Shakespeare's Laurence never mentions his own possible fault until he comes to the end of his tale:

> ...and, if aught in this
> Miscarried by my fault, let my old life
> Be sacrific'd, some hour before his time,
> Unto the rigour of severest law.[37]

However, Shakespeare's Friar is not without pithy remarks upon occasion. These, in fact, are what we remember him by, and they are, to some extent, brought about by time compression. In Brooke, after Juliet is found apparently dead in her bed, leeches are sent for, who pronounce her dead. This involves some time. In Shakespeare, the Friar is near and enters her chamber without delay. Because of this time compression, he has the chance to make some rather astute remarks in the way of chastisement of Juliet's parents:

> ...Heaven and yourself
> Had part in this fair maid; now heaven hath all,
> And all the better it is for the maid.
> Your part in her you could not keep from death,
> But heaven keeps his part in eternal life.
> The most you sought was her promotion,
> For twas your heaven she should be advanc'd.[38]

One other point of deviation between the two versions of the Friar must be indicated here. In Brooke, the Friar seems to be a character of more craftiness than in Shakespeare. For instance, when Juliet leaves her home to meet Romeus and be married in the Friar's cell, she is accompanied by her Nurse and a maidservant. Time is consumed in getting rid of the women in order that Juliet may be free to join the waiting Romeus and be married by the Friar. It is the Friar who exercises the craftiness necessary.

> Then turning to the nurse and to the other maid,
> 'Go, hear a mass or two,' quod he, 'which straightway shall be said.
> For, her confession heard, I will unto you twain
> The charge that I received of you restore to you again.[39]

In Shakespeare, such subtlety is never accorded the Friar, because such a scene never occurs. Juliet, in Shakespeare, goes alone to the Friar.

There is only one incident in which time compression seems to touch the Nurse of Juliet. In Brooke, the news of Tybalt's death at the hands of Romeus reaches the ears of Juliet through her family and friends. In Shakespeare,

the bearer of the news is Juliet's Nurse. In Brooke, after languishing for some time after the hearing of the news, Juliet discusses the situation with the Nurse. In Shakespeare, the Nurse has been about the business of procuring the rope ladder, Romeo's means of access to his wedding chamber, and returns with the news which she has undoubtedly heard in the streets. The compression of time gives the Nurse the opportunity, in Shakespeare, of manifesting a trait not seen in Brooke. She deliberately gives Juliet the impression that it is Romeo who has been killed, and in her roundabout way of relating the whole story, drives Juliet nearly mad with anxiety. The teasing nature of Shakespeare's Nurse is not even glimpsed in Brooke because of his not using her as an instrument of time compression. Thus the Nurse in Shakespeare gains dramatic force.

Capulet is not so much affected by Shakespeare's compression of time as the other characters discussed. His cruelty to Juliet and his misunderstanding of her capacity for love are emphasized by the time compression, but whether he insisted upon marriage within one or seven days would make little difference except for intensification of his cruelty, which is indeed present in both versions of the story. Another case of this occurs when Juliet returns from the Friar's cell with the potion in

her possession. In Shakespeare, her father is busily working at the preparation of the next day's wedding feast. His callousness is intensified in that he takes little notice of his daughter's apparent attempt to please him and accede to his wishes in the matter of marriage. His only attitude is "Haste, haste!" In Brooke, because the marriage is not to take place for several days after Juliet's visit to the Friar, the father is not so engaged upon her arrival home. Thus Capulet, upon being appraised by his wife of his daughter's change of heart, sits at leisure, and there is time given for tears to roll down his cheeks while he gives thanks for the happy turn of events, thus revealing that he would much rather marry Juliet to Paris with her consent than without. On the other hand, Capulet, in Shakespeare, can give the affair no more notice than a wave of the hand in his gluttonous preparation for the morrow's feast, thus giving the impression that the feast and the fun forthcoming are more important than a happy bride, who would be, incidentally, his daughter. Although all of this tends to make Shakespeare's Capulet less sympathetic, it also tends to give him more dramatic emphasis.

Thus it may be seen that all of the central characters in Romeo and Juliet have been affected by the time compression exercised by Shakespeare in adapting the plot of

Brooke's poem to the stage. Shakespeare's Romeo is to Brooke's Romeus as the butterfly is to the caterpillar. He becomes far more attractive, dropping the procrastination found in Brooke. He is less self-conscious, irrasible and tedious. He is more dynamic, though inexperienced, and in his carelessness of personal danger, uncomplaining when his adverse fate becomes manifest. Juliet undergoes a similar metamorphosis, displaying a sense of humor in place of the procrastination, flirtatiousness, and devious whining of Brooke's heroine. She matches Romeo in courage, urgency and single-mindedness. In other words, both Romeo and Juliet become more dramatically attractive and sympathetic in Shakespeare. Friar Laurence is not the windbag in Shakespeare that he is in Brooke. Shakespeare's time compression does not allow for the poetic Friar's preaching and garrulousness. In Shakespeare, the Friar is less crafty because of the elimination of situations requiring such skill, and he is less concerned with his own punishment for his part in the love affair because of the limited time allowed for explanation, thus appearing somewhat more noble of mind. The nurse becomes more prominent in Shakespeare because she becomes an important instrument of Romeo's access to Juliet. She is of more importance because of being "in" on the plans of the couple. Because of the errands upon which she is sent,

it is she who hears important news first and is therefore able to indulge her teasing nature. Because she displays definite human traits in addition to devotion to Juliet, she emerges in Shakespeare from the shadows surrounding her in Brooke, becoming an important living character, extremely interesting in her lovableness and earthiness. Capulet, in his turn, becomes a great deal more earthy, to the extent of becoming almost swine-like. The time compression in Shakespeare intensifies his cruelty to Juliet because the wedding he insists upon is much sooner. In Shakespeare, his hardness is contrasted more sharply with Juliet's pitiful situation because the proximity of the wedding requires him to be in the midst of preparations for the feast when she returns from the Friar with the poison, thus rendering him in his hurry impervious to the evidences of his daughter's endeavors to please him. Though he is more cruel in Shakespeare, he is because of that very cruelty, a more dramatically outstanding character in Shakespeare.

In fact, it may be safely stated that all of the characters affected by time compression in this play emerge more dramatically vivid and distinct, necessarily so because of the new medium into which Shakespeare fitted the story. Because of the lack of narrative in a

play intensification of strong traits and complete or nearly complete elimination of weak traits must be accomplished. Time compression adds to the intensification because economy of movement demands that each character perform as many functions as possible in order to further the action of the plot as smoothly and quickly as possible.

CHAPTER II

JULIUS CAESAR

In writing Julius Caesar, Shakespeare compressed into the action of five days (not consecutive) events which in actuality occurred over a period of two years and four months.[1] The period involved is that intervening between Caesar's triumphal return to Rome from Manda, Spain, in 45 B.C. and the second half of the Battle of Phillipi in October, 42 B.C. (It will be remembered that Caesar's assassination occurred 15 March 44 B.C.)

This is one of the few tragedies of Shakespeare, the direct sources of which are fairly certain. There is no indication that Shakespeare used any other source than Plutarch's Lives of Caesar, Brutus, and Antonius, which he read in North's translations.[2] A comparison of the play with North's translation of the chronicles reveals that Shakespeare followed his source most faithfully, at times merely adding metre to the speeches already set down by the biographer. Some of the best known traits of the characters, such as the thinness of Cassius, and the epilepsy of Caesar, are carefully recorded by Plutarch. At any rate, however indebted to Plutarch, Shakespeare made free with the facts supplied him in order to produce a dramatically effective play. He underplayed or

simply ignored certain happenings; he reversed the order of events; and most important of all, he compressed time.

In Act I, Scene I, Shakespeare puts into the mouths of people in the streets the news that Caesar is returning in triumph to Rome:

> Cob. ...But, indeed, sir, we make holiday, to see Caesar and to rejoice in his triumph.
>
> Mar. ...What conquest brings he home?
> What tributaries follow him to Rome
> To grace in captive bonds his chariot-wheels?

There follows some discussion about the shortness of men's memories applicable to the fall of Pompey and the rise of Caesar, with the following command from Flavius:

> ...Disrobe the images
> If you do find them deck'd with ceremonies.
>
> Mar. May we do so?
> You know it is the feast of Lupercal.

Scene II, which also takes place in a public place, fills the stage with celebrants of the Lupercalia, a Roman holiday observed on February 15. The compression of time in this case amounts to four months. As has been previously stated, Caesar actually returned to Rome in October, 42 B.C. However, Shakespeare compressed the intervening time, and his Caesar arrives in Rome during the festival of the Lupercalia.

Also, in the early part of the play there is considerable juggling of events in addition to the compression of

time. In Shakespeare, for instance, the tribunes Flavius and Marullus, without the knowledge of Caesar, pull wreaths and decorations from the statues of Caesar before the Lupercalian festivities during which Caesar was offered the crown by Mark Antony. In Plutarch, this incident does not occur until after the ceremonies, at which time, Caesar, being acutely aware of the people's aversion to his being crowned, by their reactions during the ceremonies, is mightily offended and deprives Marullus and Flavius of their Tribuneships. In accusing them he speaks also against the people, calling them beasts. The people, who are in favor of the actions of the Tribunes, go immediately to Marcus Brutus. Brutus, because of the many favors accorded him by Caesar, cannot be persuaded to rebellion. The people, not daring to broach the subject further, resort to throwing goading pamphlets about his seat in the Senate. In Shakespeare, Cassius is the sole instigator of this ruse. In Shakespeare, Brutus is never approached by the people at large.

To sum up, then, the effect of these early compressions and jugglings of time upon the characterization of the "mob," is rather obvious. In Shakespeare, the proletariat appear to be merely the dupes of the politicians, used by Shakespeare in Scene I primarily to allow time for the audience to get settled, even though they are expressing opinions

which, in Plutarch, change the whole of fate. Because of this juggling of the incident of the wreaths, the commoners, being only time-fillers, are degraded, and the tribunes appear ill-tempered and precipitate in their attitude and action. Another effect is the elimination of Caesar's vindictiveness, so evident in Plutarch, as well as the elimination of his expressions of contempt for the people. (The expressions of contempt consisted of a play on the word Brutes, used by the people as a term of praise for the tribunes in comparing them with descendants of the old Brutus who drove the kings from Roma, and twisted by Caesar to "Bruti," meaning beasts.)

Dramatically, of course, Shakespeare's manipulation is sound because the weight of action and responsibility is thrown upon the principals. In Plutarch, Cassius does not begin his play until after the Lupercalian ceremonies and demonstrations of the people, thus acting in accordance with the desires of the populace in his endeavors to incite Brutus to action. In Shakespeare, even before Cassius is informed of the offering of the crown to Caesar, he is working on Brutus. Again, it is Cassius who instigates the pamphlet-throwing. In Shakespeare, then, Cassius carries more responsibility for the bloodshed to follow; he is more the man of action. His motives, in Shakespeare, become the manifestations of jealousy and craftiness, more

than those of civic interest and friendly desires for Brutus. Brutus, in Plutarch, is made to withstand the pressings of the people before even coming in contact with the urgings of Cassius. In Shakespeare, Cassius alone is able to wield enough power to set the thoughts of Brutus in the ways of conspiracy, and the pamphlet-throwing is merely the clincher. Because of this Brutus seems weaker in Shakespeare.

According to history, Caesar, upon his triumphal return to Rome from Spain, paused outside of the city until his declared amnesty for the friends of Pompey was known throughout the city and the Senate had voted him sacrosanctity, the Senators binding themselves by oath to protect him from injury. These things having been accomplished, he dismissed his Spanish bodyguard and entered Rome.[3] In Shakespeare, this delay is not mentioned, but the whole of Caesar's arrival is delayed until the eve of the Lupercalian festivities. This would make Caesar appear more the psychologist of mob inclination in taking unto himself the holiday spirit already present among the throngs of Rome. Be this as it may, the second scene of Julius Caesar is a masterpiece of contrast, with the clouds of conspiracy hanging darkly above the joint festivities of Caesar's homecoming and the national holiday. Caesar, by all this, seems nobler

somehow, and his eventual fall is of more frightening depth. The combined glow of victory and holiday good-will seems to etch more sharply his potent figure against the clouds surrounding him.

The character of Mark Antony is the next entity upon which the effects of time compression seem to work. The situation involved this time is the compact of Antony with the conspirators after the assassination of Caesar. In Shakespeare, the assassins have just finished the ceremony of the blood-bath about Caesar's corpse and are about to sally forth with good-will proclamations to the mob, when the servant of Mark Antony appears upon the scene, bearing Antony's request for an explanation of the killing and a definition of his own status. Brutus, immediately sure of himself and Antony, issues an invitation for Antony's immediate presence, an invitation which is quickly accepted before Cassius is able to utter more than a hint of his misgivings.[4]

While Cassius occasionally tries to warn Brutus, Antony talks with the other conspirators, actually with Brutus, and they agree upon a course of action:

> Bru. ...And you shall speak
> In the same pulpit whereto I am going,
> After my speech is ended.
>
> Ant. ...Be it so;
> I do desire no more.

Bru. Prepare the body then, and follow us.

/Exeunt all but Antony/[5]

Antony then delivers to Caesar his private farewell address, which consists of twenty-two lines only. At this point a servant of Octavius enters, and Antony bids him carry warning to his master not to enter Rome until he, Antony, is able to ascertain the trend of affairs to follow his now-determined course of revenge. All of these events fall upon the heels of one another during a matter of probably an hour or so.

In Plutarch, two days elapse before Antony comes to an agreement with the conspirators. Brutus and his confederates try, shortly after the murder, to approach the people, but because of their fright, are unable to make themselves understood. Brutus dismisses his friends until the next day, when the people are met with again. They, the people, show neither approval nor disapproval, but are silent. They are sorry for the death of Caesar, and yet they respect Brutus. The Senate meets in an endeavor to smooth over the affair and calm the people. Antony has sent down his son as a pledge, since he is Consul. Upon this assurance, Brutus and his men take heart and appear at the Capitol. Actually Antony and Cassius sup together that night. The next day, the Senate meets again. All this is done carefully in order not to arouse

the mighty anger of the people. The principals are extremely conscious of the populace, and all factions meet on the most friendly terms, at least outwardly. The Senate grants general pardon and ordains that Caesar shall have an honorable funeral. Also, during this time, the Senate opens Caesar's will and finds therein the legacy of money to every citizen of Rome. At this point, the citizenry of Rome, having no need at all for a ranting Antony, becomes riotous in its desire to avenge Caesar's death. It is at this point that one of Caesar's friends, Cinna, troubled by a dream, appears at the marketplace in hope of paying homage at Caesar's funeral and is torn to pieces by the mob which has mistaken him for another Cinna, one of the conspirators.[6] This, according to Plutarch, frightens the conspirators more than anything else, and having foreseen this danger and wisely provided means of escape, they flee.

Antony both benefits and loses because of the time compression in Shakespeare's play. In the first place, he benefits by seeming brave, even foolhardy, good dramatic characteristics. In Shakespeare, during the first shock of the assassination, while all is in tumult before declarations are made, Antony has the temerity to make his whereabouts known and to meet the assassins at the scene of their work. He is able to speak with a

double tongue, even while formulating his plan for revenge. He plans as he speaks, not having time for any sort of contemplative reasoning or weighing of odds. He is quick-witted in his agreement not to speak against the conspirators, foreseeing his own ability to move the crowd by innuendo. While he is assuring Brutus of his integrity he must be casting about in his mind for possibilities and comes upon the notion of using Octavius, because as soon as the conspirators leave him he sends the servant of Octavius upon the errand of establishing between Octavius and himself the bond which is later to lead to the formation of the Triumvirate. In Plutarch, he has two days in hiding in which to devise his plans. Incidentally, in Plutarch, Antony has no thought of Octavius until some time after the flight of the conspirators, and then it is Octavius who presents himself, unsolicited, in Rome. (It must be remembered that the people of Rome were tired of constant civil war, first between the factions of Pompey and Caesar, then between Caesar and those who wished to depose him, and now between Mark Antony and Brutus. They were distressed at the idea of a new claimant to power, Octavius.) Shakespeare, of course, does not make much mention of this rivalry between Octavius and Antony simply because there is no time. Thus Antony seems not so power-greedy in Shakespeare as he actually was.

Instead, Shakespeare, in the twinkling of an eye, seals a bond, fictitional, of course, between the two beside the corpse of Caesar, as Antony issues his warning to the servant of Octavius.

The difference between the funeral speeches in Plutarch and Shakespeare is enhanced by the time compression. In Plutarch, as has been stated, the Senate has time to open Caesar's will. The people hear of it themselves. The people rebel of themselves. When Antony speaks, the crowd is already incensed against the conspirators in spite of the coalition of the Senate, Antony, and the conspirators, for common peace. When Antony takes the pulpit for his oration, in Plutarch, his plan for revenge, if he has one so soon, is all but launched. In Plutarch, the reading of the will to the people is not a subtle trick of Antony's, as it is in Shakespeare. When he speaks to the people they are fully aware of the will, and Antony simply feeds the flame of their already burning anger. In Shakespeare this is a stroke of genius, far exceeding the display of Caesar's wounds because it appeals to the acquisitive instinct of human beings. It is the <u>coup de grace</u>, <u>after</u> the display of the body. In Plutarch, Antony simply displays the body, betraying none of the dramatic sense of Shakespeare's Antony in building excitement by beginning with the lesser and ending with the greater. In other words, Shakespeare's Antony dis-

plays a better knowledge of human nature, aided by the opportunities presented by the dramatist's compression of time.

Shakespeare's Antony is more masterful. Instead of waiting two days and not meeting the conspirators at the scene of their deed but meeting the Senate as a temporizing body, he takes the situation into his own hands. He gambles all on his own persuasive personality. He does not send a hostage. In Plutarch, the Senate, in the hope of dividing power equitably, awards various honors and provinces to Antony and the conspirators. In Shakespeare, no Antony is to be seen standing about accepting monetary favors. In Shakespeare, Antony has a clearer, brighter flame. It is impossible to envisage Shakespeare's Antony dining at a common table with Cassius, the arch-conspirator. In Shakespeare, Antony plunges into the middle of chaos, gambling his all, his life and his honor, on his own powers. There is no time for haggling. His quick-wittedness and bravery pull him through.

The compression of two days' time into a matter of minutes has its effect upon the character of Brutus also. However, it is of a dual nature. For one thing, in Plutarch, Brutus has two days in which to cogitate upon the inclusion of Antony in his plans. He has two days in which to listen to the warnings of Cassius. Lastly,

he has the son of Antony within his reach. Actually, in view of his decision to spare Antony, the lapse of two days in Plutarch makes him seem more gullible than he appears in Shakespeare. However, in Shakespeare, he seems to be one more quickly swayed by the words and appearance of another. He seems also to be a man of quicker decision. In Shakespeare, he seems to have more faith in snap judgment and in his own power over others.

Again, the people have less power in Shakespeare because of the time compression. They have no opportunity in which to frighten the Senate and literally force a reconciliation between the factions. They are merely used to murder Cinna and to be incensed by Antony. They have no reasoning power of their own, but, because of the time compression, are at the disposition of the "heavies." They have no opportunity by their silence, as in Plutarch, to cast doubt upon the minds of Brutus and his cohorts, and to force a new meeting of the Senate. The murder of Cinna in Plutarch is not the meaningless violence of a mob. In Plutarch, Cinna the conspirator is heard to declaim against Caesar, thus giving reason for the murder of another Cinna the next day. Shakespeare's omission of the incident with Cinna the conspirator also eliminates the opportunity of showing another phase of the character of Brutus, because it is during this first scene that the

mob breaks out in violence against the first Cinna, and Brutus, in his concern for the safety of his fellows, sends them away to try to speak to the crowd another day. Probably Brutus' first doubts assail him at this point.

Cassius is affected slightly by this instance of time compression in that one can hardly imagine Shakespeare's arch-conspirator sitting down to dine with Mark Antony, Caesar's darling. In Plutarch, Cassius seems a bit more civic-minded, in doing his best to smooth over a delicate situation, at the behest of a Senate intimidated by the power of the people.

The next instance of noticeable time compression occurs during the interim of the flight of the conspirators and the Battle of Phillipi. Plutarch notes this in the following way:

> The people growing weary now of Antonius pride -and insolency, who ruled all things in manner with absolute power: they desired that Brutus might returne againe, and it was also looked for, that Brutus would come him selfe in person....[7]

In Shakespeare, this passage of time is unnoted. During this interim many incidents worthy of note take place. For instance, it is a verified historical fact that Octavius entered Rome in April, 44 B.C.[8] In July of that year, Octavius was legally accepted as Caesar's son,[9] thus assuming the right of revenge for Caesar's death. The Triumvirate was formed 27 November 43 B.C.[10] In January,

42 B.C., Caesar was proclaimed a god by the people and the Senate.[11]

In the meantime, also before the Battle of Phillipi, Cassius and his troops conquered Lycia, and Brutus and his cohorts were lucky at Rhodes. All of these things occurred before Brutus and Cassius met at the Hellespont in September, 42 B.C.[12] Thus a span of three years and three months occurred between Caesar's death and the final gathering together of the forces which were to fight at Phillipi. Plutarch describes these happenings, but without dates.

In Shakespeare, this amount of time is greatly compressed. At the end of Act III, Scene iii, the crowd, after killing Cinna, is madly raging through the city in search of the conspirators. Act IV, Scene i, reveals the Triumvirate, composed of Antony, Octavius and Lepidus, calmly sitting in conference, disposing of friend and foe alike, already trying to outdo one another in treachery. Shakespeare does not remark the passage or non-passage of time, but the effect of the one scene coming closely upon the heels of another suggests little lapse of time. Scene ii of the same act is a camp near Sardis, where Brutus and Cassius are joined. The effect is that of a meeting simultaneous with that of the Triumvirate, with Brutus and Cassius already at odds. At this time, Cassius, the veteran of many campaigns, is again doubtful of the

proposed strategies of Brutus. None of the historical events previously mentioned is even hinted at by Shakespeare.

Shakespeare, in compressing the lapse of time, lent a certain amount of urgency to his characters as well as to his plot. The picture Shakespeare paints presents an Antony in swift, loyal union with Octavius, hot upon the heels of the assassins of his dear patron Caesar, with the full support of the populace behind him. Historically this is not so. Time enough elapsed, according to Plutarch, for the ardor of the people to cool and for them to begin to wish for the return of Brutus. The excesses of Antony were becoming distasteful to them. His constant bickering with Octavius was another cause for unrest. Because of the compression of time none of this side of Antony's character or of the popular opinion of him is to be seen in Shakespeare. Again, because of the omission of the news of the legal adoption of Octavius as the son of Caesar, in Shakespeare, Octavius would seem to owe all to Antony's protection of his rights.

Therefore, Antony would seem the stronger, and Octavius the weaker. In Shakespeare, Brutus seems doubly alone and forsaken on the eve of Phillipi because of the omission of the time during which the Roman populace began to desire his return. He seems more tragic when he

makes his last stand against fate than did the real Brutus, who was not without support. In Plutarch, during their exile from Rome, both Cassius and Brutus have the opportunities of winning rather considerable victories in the name of Rome. Cassius is less of a dependent of Brutus; he wins his victories independently, proving his worth as an efficient, if not benevolent, conqueror. Brutus, in turn, is not so wholeheartedly bent upon flight as Shakespeare makes him out to be. He has time for his conquests and proves himself to be not unmerciful to the conquered. In other words, Cassius and Brutus are both given the opportunity of covering themselves with military glory. They are not in actuality, as in Shakespeare, abjectly foredefeated people, alone, friendless, and without glory.

The last evidence of time compression worthy of notice occurs during the Battle of Phillipi. According to historical sources, the passage of time occurs as follows:

> After the death of Julius Caesar, Mark Antony aroused the Roman populace to such a peak that they fled to the East (Brutus and Cassius). In 42 BC they gathered their forces at Macedon... in the first engagement the army commanded by Brutus gained slight advantage over the troops of Octavius, but Cassius was defeated by Antony. Cassius, under the impression that Brutus had been defeated, committed suicide. For almost three weeks after the first battle of Phillipi, Brutus very wisely avoided a renewal of the

> conflict with the combined forces of Antony and Octavius. With the approach of winter and increased shortage of provisions, Antony and Octavius might have been forced to give up the conflict. Had Brutus been able to continue his policy...but his officers insisted on fighting a second battle. This time Brutus was decisively defeated and, like Cassius, took his own life.[13]

> In the summer of the year 42 B.C. Antony led a division of the joint army of the Triumvirate across the sea and through Macedonia; followed soon after Octavius with additional forces. They were met at Phillipi, and there in two great battles fought with an interval between of twenty days.[14]

Plutarch, of course, takes cognizance of this passage of time by recounting the events taking place during it, including a naval battle, the news of which did not reach the ears of Brutus until twenty days after it was fought. An exact reckoning of the actual passage of time was found by verification in recognized history books of the dates of the events recorded by Plutarch.[15]

This last instance of time compression had its effect upon the characters involved. According to history, Brutus was prepared, even after the death of Cassius, to play a waiting game, literally starving the armies of Octavius and Antony into submission. Only upon the insistance of his captains was he involved in the second battle of Phillipi.[16] He was not in actuality so easily defeated as he is in Shakespeare. In Shakespeare, the suicide of Cassius spurs Brutus immediately into battle in Act V,

Scene iii, in a last desperate tour de force. He seems much less mature in Shakespeare, however more dramatic and tragic. In reality he was not at all impetuous, as has been mentioned above, but an experienced soldier, not willing to admit defeat until the full hand had been played out, not until he found himself defeated at sea and crossed in policy by his underlings. There was far less emotion in the real Brutus, but because of this lack he was somewhat less sympathetic than Shakespeare's Brutus.

To sum up briefly, then, the effect of time compression upon the plebeians is to turn them into an illiterate mob, easily swayed by the oratorical devices of the principals. The tribunes appear ill-tempered (without provocation) and precipitate. Caesar benefits, however, because of the elimination of the evidences of his vindictiveness and his contempt for the plebeians. His figure looms more tragically in Shakespeare because of the contrast of his gloomy fate with the gaiety of his surroundings in one place, and because of the contrast of his helplessness with the efficiency of the conspirators in another place. Mark Antony becomes more the man of action in the play. He acts more quickly, more upon impulse; he is more subtle and forward looking, and is far more the opportunist than his historical counterpart. His popularity, because of time compression, never diminishes, and he continues to

the end the darling of the mob. Cassius, in Shakespeare, becomes more the arch-conspirator, carrying more responsibility for the bloodshed from motives more sharply outlined as those of jealousy and craftiness than as those of civic interest. He is more dependent upon Brutus. Brutus is much more gullible and impetuous, particularly in his trust of Antony and in quelling the fears of Cassius. He is less the soldier because of the elimination of his victorious battles. Both he and Cassius are far less sure of themselves in Shakespeare. They carry with them the fear born of flight which is never relieved by subsequent victories. Brutus is far more easily destroyed in the play. His last plunge into battle, spurred by the despair he feels at the suicide of Cassius, epitomizes his lack of maturity and his impetuosity, in direct opposition to the picture provided by Plutarch of the experienced soldier playing a waiting game and forcing his opponents to defeat him at every turn before admitting defeat. However, as has been stated before, Shakespeare's Brutus is by far the more sympathetic because of the changes wrought by Shakespeare with time compression. The resultant emphasis of characterization provided the necessary explosiveness and pathos necessary to compelling drama. The principals become more sympathetic, and the minor characters become lower, more degraded, thereby emphasizing the nobility of the principals.

CHAPTER III

ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA

The source for this play is commonly acknowledged to be mainly Plutarch's Lives,[1] even though some critics have detected other influences. MacCallum remarks:

> He took Plutarch's Marcus Antonius as his chief and almost sole authority, resorting possibly for suggestions of situation and phrase to the Senecan tragedies on the same theme, probably for the descriptions of Egypt to Holland's translation of Pliny or Cory's translation of Leo, and almost certainly for many details about Sextus Pompeius to the 1573 version of Appian; but always treating the Life not only as his inexhaustible storehouse, but as sufficient guarantee for any statement that it contained. In short, he could give the history of the time, not as it was but as Plutarch represented it, and as Plutarch's representation explained itself to an Elizabethan.[2]

Naturally, an Elizabethan would have access to the other works mentioned above and be somewhat influenced by them not necessarily through direct contact. Be that as it may, Shakespeare's immediate source for his play Antony and Cleopatra is generally conceded to be Plutarch's Lives.

The play covers the historical period from Fulvia's death in 40 B.C. to the deaths of Antony and Cleopatra in 30 B.C., a space of ten years.[3] Shakespeare, in adapting this long period of actual time to stage time, compressed the action into twelve days with intervals.[4]

This compression had its effect upon the characters Shakespeare adapted to his rendition of the well-known tragedy.

Shakespeare opens his play at a time when the liaison between Antony and Cleopatra is already in full bloom, even though Fulvia, his first wife, is still alive and waging her wars. In fact, Cleopatra was ready to wed Antony in 37 B.C.[5] However, in Act I, Scene ii of the play news of Fulvia's death is brought to Antony. Actually, Fulvia's death occurred in 40 B.C., and by that time, Sextus Pompeius, the son of Pompey the Great, whom Julius Caesar overcame, had carried his wars of aggression into the very provinces of Rome, the effects of Fulvia's wars were becoming serious, and the advances of the Parthians were becoming a real cause of alarm.[6] In Shakespeare's Act I, Scene ii, all the above news is brought to the ears of Antony at once, and Antony prepares to leave the court of Cleopatra.

This synchronization of events has a mingled effect upon the character of Antony. Since, as has been stated above, Cleopatra is avowedly ready to wed Antony as early as 37 B.C., Antony must surely have thoughts of setting himself up as independent Emperor with his Egyptian Queen. However, there are two reasons why he should not; "lingering respect for his marriage with Fulvia, whom in a way

he still loved, and dread of the avenging might of Rome directed by all the craft of Octavius. These impediments are suddenly removed."[7] Their removal is solely Shakespeare's conception. MacCallum states that perhaps Shakespeare's invention, in this case, could have sprung, in part at least, from a suggestion of Appian, but that in any case, it is of far-reaching significance. Historically, Fulvia was still alive when Antony started out for Rome. Therefore, Fulvia was not the reason for his journey because Octavius had already driven her and her brother Lucius out of Italy. Labienus, the old foe of Caesarism, had led the Parthians into the provinces. To meet these dangers Antony left Egypt and addressed himself to the Parthians first. It was only at Fulvia's entreaty that he altered his plans and sailed for home, but her death facilitated a truce with Octavius.[8] Once he and Octavius were allies, Sextus Pompeius was dealt with, and Antony was able to turn against the Parthians. These are the events in the biography which cause Antony to leave Egypt.

In Shakespeare, the above news is coupled with the news of Fulvia's death, which actually occurred much later, and the news of Sextus Pompeius' threat to the sea empire of Rome. Shakespeare's synchronization of these events really changes Antony's reasons for return.

Actually, as they appear in Shakespeare, the reasons should be reasons for his remaining in Egypt and pursuing his present course. The death of Fulvia smoothes the way to marriage with the Queen. The danger from Rome due to the enmity of Octavius and Fulvia is removed for the time being, and he is able to sit back and allow Pompey and Octavius to wear each other out.

MacCallum states that Antony has the further choice of allying himself with Pompey, who is well inclined toward him. "But," he adds,

> In Shakespeare's Antony, the very removal of external hindrances gives new force to those within his own heart. The memory of his wife rises up with new authority, the entreaties of his friends and the call of Rome sound with louder appeal in his ears;
>
> ...Not alone
> The death of Fulvia, with more urgent touches,
> Do strongly speak to us: but the letters too
> Of many our contriving friends in Rome
> Petition us at home.
> (I.ii.186)
>
> With a man of his emotional nature, precisely the opportunity so procured to carry out one set of his wishes, gives the other set the mastery. Of his wife's death he exclaims:
>
> There's a great spirit gone! Thus did I desire it:
> What our contempt doth often hurl from us,
> We wish it ours again; the present pleasure,
> By revolution lowering, does become
> The opposite of itself: She's good, being gone;
> The hand could pluck her back that shoved her on.
> I must from this enchanting queen break off.
> (I.ii.126)[9]

And so Antony returns to Rome to patch up the Triumvirate and give Octavius a helping hand, neglecting his

possible dreams of being Emperor of Egypt at the side of Cleopatra. Never again will he have the opportunity he has foolishly thrown away of legitimitizing his relationship with Cleopatra. However, even before he leaves Rome it is clear that he will never stick to his resolution to be the Roman. His promises to Cleopatra before leaving are like "so many millstones around his neck" as he sets off to "swim in the dangerous cross-currents of Roman politics."[10] However, this Antony of Shakespeare's, no matter how immature, is much fuller of bravado, generosity, and impulsiveness. This Antony believes his own promises and resolutions, failing characteristically to recognize the fact that he is beaten by himself before he starts. However, his motives become, in Shakespeare, more selfless and certainly more romantic. There is a touch of Prince Hal about him.

Upon his return to Rome, both in Plutarch and Shakespeare, Antony is cognizant of Fulvia's demise (according to Plutarch, she died while Antony was enroute), and is easily led into marriage with Octavius' half-sister, Octavia. Though it is generally agreed that the marriage of Octavia and Antony was one of political convenience, her power over her husband has been greatly diminished by Shakespeare's compression of time. Due to this compression of time, the duration of Antony's sojourn from Cleopatra seems rather short. In Act III, Scene vi, upon her

return from Athens, Octavius informs his sister of Antony's return to Cleopatra. In Scene vii of the same act, Cleopatra and Antony give indication of having been together again for some time. This is the eighth day of Shakespeare's production.[11] Actually, however, years passed before Antony was again at the side of his queen. During his stay with Octavia, for instance, time enough elapsed for the making of peace with Sextus Pompeius.[12] This occurred in the spring of 39 B.C.[13] (It should be here stated that Antony married Octavia in 40 B.C., the fall of the year in which Fulvia died.) This would account for at least five months spent with Octavia.

In addition, Octavia wintered with Antony in Greece in the year 38 B.C., and in the following year in Italy.[14] Consider, in addition, the following:

> Antony did not leave Italy till after the birth of Octavia's daughter, the elder Antonia, about August or September 39. Then he and Octavia went to Athens, which for the next two years was his headquarters.[15]

Antony did not part from Octavia until after the births of two daughters.[16] As a matter of fact, Octavia, at the time of her parting with Antony, was already expecting his third child.[17]

After parting with Octavia, about to make her second intercession on his behalf with Octavius, Antony left

Italy late in 37 B.C., to make war upon the Parthians. Upon entering Asia, he immediately sent for Cleopatra and spent that winter with her, forcing the men to lie in the field all winter because of his debauchery in her company.[18]

In spite of the fact that Antony was apparently quite anxious to be in the company of Cleopatra once again, the strength and attractiveness of Octavia shine through the chronological accountings of history. With this woman Antony lived for almost three years, a considerably longer time than the dramatist allowed. The relationship must have been the most normal that Antony ever experienced. Octavia followed him, sharing his soldier's life, minus debauchery, and bearing his children. During this time her constructive influence made itself apparent in his political and military gains. Her continued intercessions with her brother on Antony's behalf were made at this time, and if ever Antony had the chance to live up to his office of Triumvir of Rome, now was the time. In a man of Antony's character as portrayed in both the biography and the drama, strong yearnings toward the East could never have been held in abeyance for long. One must assume the yearnings were not so strong in actuality. Shakespeare combined the first and second attempts of Octavia in mediation and placed the final

parting at Athens, when in reality Antony made one more trip to Rome before the final breach.

All of Shakespeare's compression tends to render Octavia impotent and colorless. Actually, she was a strong woman, stronger by far than Antony, striving to reconcile brother and husband, at the same time attempting to preserve the honor of all concerned by holding strongly to ties of family and prestige. This is the woman rendered effete by the craftsman's stroke. This is the woman who literally commanded for three years the love and respect of the debauched Antony. Again, however, by diminishing the force of Octavia, Shakespeare enhanced the power of the infatuation of his principal Antony, and to a lesser degree, the attraction of Cleopatra.

To go on with the compression of time consumed by the play as a whole, the following should be stated. Between the time of Antony's leave-taking of Octavia, Lepidus was deposed by Octavius, who gave no account of the spoils of which he had deprived the fallen Triumvir. In 34 B.C., Antony seized Armenia, celebrating his triumph in Armenia, not Rome. In 33 B.C., many uncompromising messages were sent between Octavius and Antony, and on top of all this, Antony ordered Octavia from his house. Finally, in 32 B.C., Octavius declared war against Cleopatra and deprived Antony of his authority.

As a result of this, in 31 B.C., on the second of September, the Battle of Actium was fought.[19] These, then, are the happenings which mark the passage of a period of six years in actual history. They are covered in three days in Shakespeare's play. True, the days are not consecutive, but the effect is one of a short interval of time. There is an overtone of hurriedness about the sequence of events leading effectively to the climax. However, in spite of the dramatic perfection of Shakespeare's device, it is interesting to notice the effects upon the characters of both the historical and the stage dramas.

The effect upon Octavia is wrought by Shakespeare's omission of her second attempt at conciliation between husband and brother, even after Antony has showered provinces upon Cleopatra and his illegitimate children. Lost is the sense of her forbearance and tenacity. Lost also is mention of Octavia's care of the children of Antony, both by herself and by Fulvia, Antony's first wife. Shakespeare certainly mentions Antony's promise to meet Octavia in Athens and his failure to keep that promise at the behest of Cleopatra, but the situation serves not to point out Octavia's brave conduct in returning to Rome and looking after the children and affairs of Antony as much as it does to point out the depth of

Antony's infatuation with Cleopatra and the power of Cleopatra over Antony. In Shakespeare, Octavia is easily swayed by her brother, who finds it necessary only once to inform her of Antony's "treason," to himself and to her:

> Maec. Only th' adulterous Antony, most large
> In his abominations, turns you off,
> And gives his potent regiment to a trull.
> That noises it against us.
>
> Oct. ...Is it so, sir?
>
> Caes. Most certain. Sister, welcome. Pray you.
> Be ever known to patience. My dear'st sister.[20]

In this her persistent striving for the welfare and reputation of Antony are lost in four words: "Is it so, sir?" Here she is meek, almost past understanding. One impeachment only,and she capitulates, leaving the play as unobtrusively as she entered it. This is not the Octavia of Plutarch, the Octavia who wove her way back and forth between Octavius and Antony like a shuttle. This is not the personification of the Roman mother and wife, fighting tigerishly for her own. Shakespeare's omission of mention of the children of Octavia by Antony divests her of the role of mother. This omission, together with the omission of mention of Cleopatra's children by Antony, serves to place the emphasis of the drama purely upon the passion of the principals.

Shakespeare's Antony does not swerve more than

momentarily from his devotion to Cleopatra. In Shakespeare, Octavia merely does her duty, and when she parts from Antony in Act III, the parting is cold. When Antony breaks his marriage vows, she is done with him, unlike Plutarch's Octavia, who pursues him to the end in complete self-forgetfulness that "her mere covenant could never call forth."[21]

The effect upon the character of Octavius is a little more devious. In the biography, Octavius, after receiving his sister for the purpose of hearing her second arguments for conciliation between him and Antony, allows Octavia to return to Athens to meet Antony again, probably foreseeing the outcome and hoping to see Antony put in the wrong.[22] This throws the light of a certain craftiness upon the character of Octavius, which is not so apparent in Shakespeare. The deposing of Lepidus by Octavius enhances the sense of his power and ruthlessness, thus making him a worthy opponent of Antony. Shakespeare mentions the former not at all, and the latter only in passing, brooking no competition for his hero. In one instance, however, Octavius is bettered in Shakespeare, and this is accomplished by lack of emphasis on his threats toward Cleopatra's children, thus making his offers of clemency more charitable and less scheming.

The exchange of uncompromising messages and Antony's celebration of his Armenian victory in Armenia instead of in Rome are eliminated in Shakespeare, thus giving the effect of suddenness to the quarrel between Octavius and Antony. Antony becomes more easily provoked to open combat.

Upon looking more carefully into the character of Antony as it is effected by the elimination of most of his relations with Octavia, one finds that Antony no more appears fickle and ungrateful to a loving wife. All of the emphasis is thrown upon his grand passion for his paramour, which appears the greater because of the elimination of outside influence.

As was mentioned previously in this chapter, in 37 B.C., Antony took leave of Octavia and proceeded to make war upon the Parthians. Shakespeare almost eliminates mention of this greatest military feat of Antony in the name of Rome. This is probably because Antony in reality did not cut the grandest of figures during this campaign, even though it occupies a large part of Plutarch's biography. The history of many incidents during this campaign revels Antony indulging in low excesses of all kinds, conducting himself in a manner not befitting a general, involving the jealousy of inferiors, dishonesty in money matters, and lack of generalship.[23] Plutarch does not

attempt to reconcile the conflicting characteristics of his Antony. Shakespeare simply almost eliminates mention of the fiasco and devotes himself to emphasizing only the admirable traits of Antony, even though in Plutarch they are far outweighed by his degrading traits. As has been mentioned, during this campaign Antony wallows in debauchery with Cleopatra, forcing his men to lie in the field all winter awaiting his satiety before waging battle. Shakespeare, once having omitted these traits, produces for the world an Antony more to be pitied than condemned, an Antony of genius, virility and steadfast principle, ruined by his one great all-absorbing passion, a truly tragic figure.

Let us turn now to the Battle of Actium, and the events immediately preceding and succeeding that event. Just prior to the battle, Plutarch's Octavius, offering odds, challenges Antony to battle on land. In Shakespeare, Antony challenges Octavius first, offering him personal combat or battle at sea.[24] This is not compression of time, but rather "juggling" of time. Apparently it did not serve Shakespeare's purpose to allow Octavius to take the lead in "dare-deviltry." Octavius, therefore, appears rather cold-blooded and even cowardly when a fight, such as would have resulted from Antony's two-fold challenge, would not be to his advantage. Antony is made out

to be a true knight errant by the dramatist simply through the device of time juggling.[25]

After the Battle of Actium, Antony, following the lead of Cleopatra, flees. In Shakespeare, he does not dismiss his followers until he reaches Alexandria, at which time he still has hope of eventual victory. In Plutarch, Antony dismisses his followers at the first stopping place, Taeharus, in the Peloponnesus.[26] The significance of this juggling of time lies in a change wrought in Antony. In Shakespeare, Antony is already safe, having reached his "lair."[27] Thus it would seem Shakespeare's Antony is more free-handed, willing to release his men from their loyalty to him gratuitously, actually throwing away allies that might be of help to him later. Plutarch's Antony released his men at their first stopping place, having quickly acknowledged defeat, and not being able to find a way out of his difficulty. Shakespeare, by this device, endows his hero with the asset of good soldiering, a lack of which Plutarch did not hesitate to reveal, at the same time carrying out his task of portraying Antony's magnificent foolishness.

Cleopatra joins Antony in Alexandria, and it is then that she and Antony decide, independently in Shakespeare, jointly in Plutarch, to petition Octavius. In Plutarch,

some time elapses before this decision is made, time in which Antony's forces are dispersed, time enough for deeper inroads of debauchery and war weariness to invade Antony's spirit. In Shakespeare, however, Antony makes his decision to appeal to Octavius before he is joined by Cleopatra. MacCallum holds that Antony's course in Shakespeare shows greater weakness but more immediate self-disgust, which is the direct manifestation of a latent but close-to-the-surface nobility.[28] Plutarch's Antony is practiced in the way of deceitful diplomacy, and it takes longer for him to come to this gesture. Plutarch's Antony, when he does come to a resolution to petition Octavius, does so after long deliberation. Again, Shakespeare succeeds in portraying Antony as a creature of violent reaction and impulsive decision. Plutarch's Antony is less pitiable because he is brought to heel by degrees.[29] Antony's fall in Shakespeare is more sudden, and therefore, he is greater and more striking.

Another example of time juggling involves the incident of Antony's second challenge to Octavius. (It will be remembered that his first occurred on the eve of Actium.) In Shakespeare, the challenge is sent after Cleopatra's apparently kindly reception of Thyreus, an ambassador of Octavius. Shakespeare's Antony at this point is stung with resentment at Octavius' low opinion of his (Antony's)

power over the woman he loves, his thus professed doubt of Cleopatra's love for him, and his refusal to consider his (Antony's) petition, while honoring that of Cleopatra. Antony feels himself counted as nothing by Octavius and yet is convinced that he outweighs Octavius in everything. He rants that Octavius remembers him not as he was, but sees him at present as only the helpless dupe of fate. He feels himself in danger of betrayal by Cleopatra, because of the connivings of Octavius. He becomes almost idiotic in his rage and has Thyreus whipped, at the same time bellowing out his challenge to Octavius. MacCallum accounts for this induced madness of Antony as the writhings of a great soul in conflict with itself as well as with its own need for the recognition it has always had.[30]

The circumstances in Plutarch under which Antony issues his second challenge to Octavius are entirely different. Antony receives news of Octavius' refusal to consider his petition with equanimity. He has Thyreus whipped as a matter of course, reproaching Cleopatra only a little if at all, and the story progresses. Minor forays ensue, and during one of these, Antony is fortunate enough to fend off an attack by Octavius' men upon Cleopatra's treasure cache at Pelusium, near the temple of Isis.[31] The "battle" is only a minor foray, but Antony makes a great to do about the whole thing, and

in his bravado bred of this trivial incident makes his second challenge. Here is nothing of the magnificent writhing rage of a great soul in distress to be found in Shakespeare, but an almost smug, sniveling manifestation of bravado on the part of the man long since parted from any former magnificence of character. There is no depth -- only elation over a slight success.[32]

In both Plutarch and Shakespeare, a soothsayer gives Antony the prophecy that Octavius will always have ascendance over him. However, Shakespeare again juggles the notes of Plutarch. In Shakespeare, the soothsayer appears before Antony's agreement with Pompey, and in Plutarch, afterwards. This transposition, in view of Antony's subsequent actions, heightens the effect in Shakespeare of levity and rashness. MacCallum states that this displacement serves to sharpen the lines Plutarch had already lightly sketched.[33] This is another example of Shakespeare's dramatic dexterity, his ability to remain true to historical fact and yet create a changed perspective.

Shakespeare's Antony seems always, in contrast to the Antony of Plutarch, to neglect or throw over opportunities as well as warnings. For instance, there is the opportunity provided by Octavius' heavy taxation of the citizens of Rome for the financing of his

war against Antony. In Plutarch, the people of Rome grumble and threaten open rebellion, thus paving a way for the return of Antony. However, Antony stupidly neglects this opportunity and does not give Octavius battle, enjoying himself instead in the embraces of Cleopatra. In Shakespeare, this situation is barely alluded to in Act III, Scene v, by Eros and Enobarbus, who know immediately that Antony will take no action. Shakespeare, following his apparent plan of enhancing the soldiership of Antony, could not (in view of his purpose) dwell upon the incident longer.

As has been mentioned above, the people played a larger part in the biography than in the play. The citizenry is spoken of only occasionally, and then with contempt, in the play. Antony is almost completely ignorant of the discontent at home. True, in Shakespeare's version, we learn that both Octavius and Antony have notified the people of mutual grievances, but on the whole, the allusions to the citizenry are most sparing and derogatory.

The character of Cleopatra has gone through many changes throughout the ages, but most sources give Shakespeare the credit for providing the ages since his time with the definitive conception of her physical as well as her psychological make-up. It has been stated

in various sources that Cleopatra, having been derived of the Ptolemaic dynasty, was of almost pure Grecian stock and therefore fair and statuesque. Shakespeare, probably having in mind the gypsies who had recently entered England from the Low Countries, presented his femme fatale in their likeness, swarthy, not necessarily physically attractive, and burning with Southern passions. However, since Shakespeare's conception of Cleopatra came into existence, hardly a soul would dream of a blond Cleopatra. The difference between Plutarch's Cleopatra and Shakespeare's is not so much physical, however, as psychological. A part of this difference is due in part to time compression (involving omission of various interludes of her life and shortening of periods of time within the incidents used), synchronization of incidents in Cleopatra's life, and inversion (or transposition) of events in which she took part.

Almost all of Shakespeare's time innovations mentioned thus far in this chapter have served to throw the emphasis of the action upon the principals, Antony and Cleopatra. Since Antony has been discussed at some length, the time has come to examine the effects of these innovations of the character of Cleopatra as Shakespeare presents her.

One of the more obvious omissions is that of any

other than fleeting mention of Cleopatra's children. Because of this omission Cleopatra in Shakespeare seems much less the mother. The assassination of Caesarion and Antyllus are not even mentioned in Shakespeare. Indeed, the character of Octavius would have suffered greatly. This omission of mention of the children leaves Cleopatra's loyalty to Antony undivided. Plutarch invariably eyes Cleopatra in an unfavorable light, but he does not fail to describe her mother's anguish for her children after the death of Antony:

> She fell into a fever withal; whereof she was very glad, hoping thereby to have good colour to absteine from meate, and that so she might have dyed easely without any trouble...But Caesar mistrusted the matter, by many conjectures he had, and therefore did put her in feare, and threatned her to put her children to shameful death. With these threats Cleopatra for feare yelded straight, as she would have yelded unto strokes; and afterwards suffred her selfe to be cured and dieted as they listed.[34]

Shakespeare mentions the threat, but in such a way that it is more of a reflection upon the character of Octavius than on that of Cleopatra, because in the play she deigns no reply. Octavius says:

> ...If you seek
> To lay on me a cruelty, by taking
> Antony's course, you shall bereave yourself
> Of my good purposes, and put your children
> to that destruction which I'll guard them from,
> If thereon you rely.[35]

Another effect of this omission is more emphasis on Cleopatra's pride. In Plutarch she seems less proud and more willing to sacrifice what pride she has for the lives of

her children. In Shakespeare, since the matter is barely referred to, Cleopatra emerges more the queen. She is faced with no such bitter struggle, but has only to nurse her wounded pride and sorrow at the loss of Antony. The only maternal utterance she makes is in reference to the serpent as a baby at her breast. In Shakespeare, the action is far too rapid to permit of death by starvation.

Cleopatra is swiftly motivated by her two main passions, her fear of being exhibited by Octavius in Rome and her loyalty and love for Antony. There is no time for her to appear in long drawn-out scenes of self-pity and degradation. Plutarch writes:

> Cleopatra being layed upon a little low bed in poore estate, when she sawe Caesar come in to her chamber, she sodainly rose up, naked in her smocke, and fell downe at his feete marvelously disfigured: both for that she had plucked her heare from her head, as also for that she had martired all her face with her nailes, and besides, her voyce was small and trembling, her eyes sonke into her heãde with continuall blubbering.[36]

It would seem impossible for Shakespeare's Cleopatra ever to reach such depths of ignominy. In Plutarch, just after this scene, Cleopatra boxes the ears of Seleucus, when he exposes to Octavius her concealment of more than half of her treasure. True, Shakespeare endows his heroine with this propensity for physical violence, but the manifestation occurs during the earlier part of the play when she jealously hears the news of Antony's marriage to

Octavia. However, in her last extremity after the death of Antony, Shakespeare gives her the power of repression. The total effect is one of maturity, a maturity gained throughout the play in spite of or because of misfortune and her love and respect for Antony. MacCallum goes so far as to say that the new dignity of Cleopatra in Shakespeare is a manifestation of collusion with Seleucus. In Plutarch, as has been mentioned, he is punished for his disclosure, but in Shakespeare he goes unpunished. In fact, he is invited to make his disclosure when he is called for. In Plutarch, he merely happens to stand by. The purpose, according to MacCallum, is to convince Octavius of her desire to live by providing for her financial future.[37]

However, reverting to the growing maturity of Shakespeare's heroine as opposed to the continuous childishness of Plutarch's one finds another rather delicate shade of difference between the two versions of the queen. This is due to a transposition (or inversion), not of action, but of time of speech. This has to do with Cleopatra's calling Antony her husband in Shakespeare. In Plutarch, she calls him lord and husband as she pulls him up to the monument to die. In Shakespeare, it is not until after she has applied the asp to her body and is undergoing the purge of death. Thus it is

that she would seem to feel their love is sanctified and transfigured. In death, it would seem, Cleopatra feels their oneness to be complete, to the exclusion of all other earthly ties.[38] Again, Shakespeare's Cleopatra reflects her new-found maturity, and in true martyr-like faith and simplicity embraces the fire of adversity as a cleansing and purifying agent, thus admitting a realization of her former iniquity, at the same time revealing a depth of sensitivity and self-contemplation not to be found in the biographer's rendition, which shows her in the throes of mere sorrow, addressing her still-living lover.

As in the case of Antony, the time-compression has made Cleopatra more pitiable than she appears in Plutarch for the simple reason that she is more worthy of compassion. In Plutarch, there are months between Antony's death and that of Cleopatra.[39] In the play, the deaths occur during the last day.[40] As in the case of Romeo and Juliet, the lovers are more pitiable because of the rapid decline of their stars and the unimpaired singleness of purpose so intrinsic a part of their lives. Cleopatra's love for Antony is the one overwhelming passion of her life, and her loyalty to his memory after death is undiluted by other considerations, such as pleas for the safety of her children, making herself pitiable

in the sight of Octavius, and endeavoring to reconcile honor with safety. Her death becomes more admirable because of the elimination of hesitancy, and along with the transposition of her calling Antony her lord and husband, her death imbues her with a flamelike nobility and singleness of purpose, almost excusing her for her past. For the moment, there is an almost virgin-like quality about her. She seems younger somehow and less the jaded courtesan as she lays herself upon her deathbed, even though she is clad in queenly attire.

The time compression in this tragedy tends to throw the weight of the action upon the principals, as in the other tragedies discussed. In the case of Antony, the time compression allowed Shakespeare to play down or eliminate most of his glaring defects. As has been remarked, there is a touch of Prince Hal about this Antony who, in Shakespeare, however immature, is full of bravado, generosity and impulsiveness. He becomes far more romantic, throwing over everything for the love of Cleopatra. The length of his stay with Octavia being greatly shortened, Antony seems less the unfaithful husband and more the faithful lover, who is distracted from his mistress only momentarily by affairs of state, including his marriage. He is more quickly provoked to quarrel, more jealous of his honor, and a better soldier. All in all, he is a far

more passionate creature in all things, but primarily in his need for Cleopatra. Even in his foolishness he is magnificent.

Cleopatra, because of time compression, almost loses the aspect of a mother, and becomes more closely tied to the love and fortunes of Antony. Through the intensifying influence of time compression, her love for Antony becomes the sole concern of her life. In renunciation of all things else, she becomes more queenly. Time compression all but obliterates the character of Octavia, and what remains is weak and colorless. She serves the purpose of emphasizing the attractions of Cleopatra and the strength of Antony's love for his mistress. Octavius is divested of a great deal of his original courage and cunning by time compression, thus serving as a foil to the dramatic Antony's flashy audacity. However, Octavius is also divested of some manifestations of his original cruelty, and this of course was necessary because he is to win out in the end to the undisputed leadership of Rome. All in all, the compression of time again emphasizes the central impression Shakespeare wished to create, that of the truly tragic hero ruined by his own tragic flaw. The dramatic effect is more compelling because of the flaw, the passion, the height from which the hero fell, and the depth to which he fell, are all increased through time compression.

CHAPTER IV

CORIOLANUS

The source for the plot of Coriolanus is Plutarch's Life of Coriolanus, which Shakespeare read in North's translation.[1] However, some expressions in the fable told by Menenius in the first act may have been suggested by the version in Camden's Remains, published in 1605.

> Wright thinks it possible that the resemblances to Camden -- first pointed out by Malone -- may be accidental, but we are inclined, with Ward, Fleay, and others, to believe that Shakespeare was really indebted to that author -- though the obligation was at best but a trifling one.[2]

Time compression is definitely present in Shakespeare's adaptation of the plot to his play. Following is a time analysis of the play as summed up by Mr. P. A. Daniel and quoted by Nielson and Hill.

> Day 1. Act I. sc. i.
> Interval /time for news from Rome to reach Corioli/.
> Day 2. Act I. sc. ii.
> Interval /time for news from the Roman army to reach Rome/.
> Day 3. Act I. sc. iii. -- x.
> Interval /Cominius and Marcius return to Rome/.
> Day 4. Act II. sc. i. (to "On, to the Capitol!").*
> Interval /Ambassadors from Corioli have arrived in Rome since the return of Cominius and Coriolanus/.
> Day 5. Act II. sc. i (remainder of scene) -- Act IV. sc. ii.
> Interval /a few days, including the journey of Coriolanus to Antium/.
> Day 6. Act IV. sc. iii.
> Interval.
> Day 7. Act IV. sc. iv. and v.

Interval.
Day 8. Act IV. sc. vi
Interval.
Day 9. Act IV. sc. ii
Interval.
Day 10. Act V. sc. vi.

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*Mr. Daniel believes that the scene should end here, as it appears to do in the Folio, where only the acts are numbered, but where we have at this point (the bottom of the page) the stage directions .... there seems to me no sufficient for setting aside the authority of the Folio in this case and there is this considerable objection, that by so doing Coriolanus is made to arrive in Rome and to be banished on one and the same day. The scene between the two Tribunes is not necessarily connected with the day of Marcius's entry into Rome, but it is inseparably connected with the day of his Consulship; and that these are two distinct days is to some extent proved by the fact that Titus Lartius is not present during the entry, but is present during the Consulship.[3]

The actual historical time represented by the play covers a period of about four years, beginning with the secession to the Mons Sacer in the year of Rome 262 and ending with the death of Coriolanus in the year 266.[4]

Omission as well as time compression plays a strong part in Shakespeare's adaptation of Plutarch's Coriolanus to a dramatic entity. As usual, Shakespeare strove to throw the main emphasis upon the principal character and to pinpoint the tragic flaw within the character. His sense of the dramatic guided him in eliminating as many distracting and conflicting facets of character as possible. The tactic of omission, whenever a mere shift of

emphasis seemed not in order, stood as a tool ready to his hand as a means of effecting the necessary elimination.

One of the most obvious omissions is that of Plutarch's Coriolanus's willingness to display his wounds to the plebians and his actually doing so. Plutarch says:

> Now Martius following this custome, shewed many woundes and cuttes apon his bodie, which he had receyved in seventeene yeres service at the warres, and in many sundrie battells, being ever the formest man that dyd set out feete to fight. So that not a man emong the people, but was ashamed of him selfe, to refuse so valliant a man: & one of them sayed to another, we must needes chuse him Consul, there is no remedie.[5]

This incident is completely omitted by Shakespeare.

> 2. Cit. ....He should have show'd us
> His marks of merit, wounds receiv'd for's country.
>
> Sic. Why, so he did, I am sure.
>
> All. No, no; no man saw 'em.
>
> 3. Cit. He said he had wounds, which he could
> Show in private;
> And with his hat, thus waving it in scorn,
> "I would be consul," says he; "aged custom
> But by your voices, will not so permit me;
> Your voices therefore." When we granted that,
> Here was "I thank you for your voices; thank you;
> Your most sweet voices. Now you have left your voices,
> I have no further with you." Was not this mockery?[6]

In Plutarch, the willingness of Coriolanus to show his wounds conflicts with his generally arrogant character, thus somewhat diluting the strength of his flaw and the justice of his punishment. In Shakespeare, as may be seen

from the quotation above, Coriolanus never shows his wounds, though he mentions the possibility of exhibiting them in private, much in the manner of a vendor of suggestive postcards on the streets of Paris. The effect is somewhat secret and conniving. His contempt for the people is almost Satanic, particularly when viewed in contrast to the open-hearted good will of the plebeians. In other words, Shakespeare succeeds in making his hero twice as arrogant as that of Plutarch. His pride, in the hands of the dramatist, becomes almost flashy, and he is unable to stoop even to conquer. Indeed, though Plutarch makes his hero choleric, he does not mark this defect as the deciding factor in his fate. Shakespeare, on the other hand, lays the burden of Coriolanus' calamities upon his ungovernable tongue, and accident does not intervene against him, as in other tragedies of Shakespeare.[7]

Shakespeare compresses time in adapting the plot from Plutarch by reducing three rebellions of the people to two. The first rebellion is described in Plutarch as follows:

> ...it fortuned there grewe sedition in the cittie, because the Senate dyd favor the riche against the people, who dyd complaine of the sore oppression of userers, of whom they borrowed money. For those that had litle, were yet spoyled of that litle they had by their creditours, for lake of abilitie to paye the userie: who offered their goodes to be solde, to them that would geve most.

And suche as had nothing left, their bodies were layed holde of, and they were made their bonde men, notwithstanding all the woundes... they shewed, which they had receyved in many battells, fighting for defence of their countrie and common wealth: of the which, the last warre they made, was against the Sabynes, wherein they fought apon the promise the riche men had made them, that from thenceforth they would entreate them more gently, and also apon the worde of Marcus Valerius chief of the Senate, who by authoritie of the counsell, and in behalfe of the riche, sayed they should performe that they had promised. But after that they had faithfully served in this last battell of all, where they overcame their enemies, seeing they were never a whit the better, nor more gently intreated, and that the Senate would geve no eare to them, but made as though they had forgotten their former promise, & suffered them to be made slaves and bonde men to their creditours, and besides, to be turned out of all that ever they had: they fell then even to flat rebellion and mutine, and to sturre up daungerous tumultes within the cittie....The poore common people seeing no redresse, gathered themselves one daye togethe̊r, and one encoraging another, they forsooke the cittie, and encamped themselves upon a hill, called this daye the holy hill, alongest the river of Tyber....they sayed, to dwell at Rome was nothing els but to be slaine, or hurte with continuall warres, and fighting for defence of the riche mens goodes. The Senate being afeard of their departure, dyd send unto them certaine of the pleasauntest olde men, and the most acceptable to the people among them. Of those, Menenius Agrippa was he, who was sent for chief man of the message from the Senate. He, after many good persuasions and gentle requestes made to the people, on the behalfe of the Senate: knit up his oration in the ende, with a notable tale, in this manner. That on a time all the members of mans bodie dyd rebell against the bellie, complaining of it, that it only remained in the middest

> of the body, without doing any thing, neither dyd beare any labor to the maintenaunce of the rest; whereas all other partes and members dyd labour paynefully, and was very carefull to satisfie the appetites and desiers of the bodie. And so the bellie, all this notwithstanding, laughed at their follie, and sayed: It is true, I first recyve all meates that nourishe mans bodie: But afterwardes I send it againe to the norishement of other partes of the same. Even so (quoth he) o you, my masters and cittizens of ROME: the reason is a like betweene the Senate, and you. For matters being well digested, & their counsells throughly examined, touching the benefit of the common commoditie that commeth unto every one of you. These persuasions pacified the people, conditionally, that the Senate would graunte that there should be yerely chosen five magistrates, which they now call Tribuni Plebis, whose office should be to defend the poore people from violence and oppression.[8]

After this, the plebeians and the patricians go off to war against the Volsces, each trying to outdo the other in valor. The second uprising, which is omitted in Shakespeare, occurs as a result of agitation by the Tribunes, who accuse the patricians of conducting a war purely for their own gain. Plutarch relates the incident as follows:

> Now when this warre was ended, the flatterers of the people beganne to sturre up sedition again, without any newe occasion, or just matter offered of complainte. For they dyd grounde this seconde insurrection against the Nobilitie and Patricians, apon the peoples miserie and misfortune, that could not but fall out, by reason of the former discorde and sedition betweene them and the Nobilitie....Now these busie pratlers that sought the peoples good will, by suche

flattering wordes, perceyving great scarsitie of corne to be within the cittie, and though there had bene plenty enough, yet the common people had no money to buye it: they spread abroad false tales and rumours against the Nobilitie, that they in revenge of the people, had practised and procured the extreme dearthe emong them. Furthermore, in the middest of this sturre, there came ambassadours to Rome from the cittie of VELITRES, that offered up their cittie to the ROMAINES, and prayed them they would send newe inhabitants to replenishe the same: bicause the plague had bene so extreme among them, and had killed such a number of them, as there was not left alive the tenth persone of the people that had bene there before. So the wise men of ROME beganne to thincke, that the necessitie of the VELITRIANS fell out in a most happy hower, and howe by this occasion it was very mete in so great a scarsitie of vittailes, to disburden ROME of a great number of cittizens: and by this means as well to take awaye this newe sedition, and utterly to ryd it out of the cittie, as also to cleare the same of many mutinous & seditious persones, being the superfluous ill humours that grevously fedde this disease. Hereupon the Consuls prickt out all those by a bill, whom they intended to sende to VELITRES, to goe dwell there as in forme of a colonie: and they leavied out of all the rest that remained in the cittie of ROME, a great number to goe against the VOLSCES, hoping by the meanes of forreine warre, to pacifie their sedition at home. Moreover they imagined, when the pore with the riche, and the meane sort with the nobilitie, should by this devise be abroad in the warres, and in one campe, and in one service, & in one like daunger: that then they would be more quiet and loving together. But Sicinius and Brutus, two seditious Tribunes, spake against either of these devises, and cried out apon the noble men....as if the Senate should hedlong cast downe the people into a most bottomless pyt. And are not yet

> contented to have famished some of the poore cittizens heretofore to death, and to put other of them even to the mercie of the plague: but a freshe, they have procured a voluntarie warre, to the ende they would leave behind no kynde of miserie and ill, wherewith the poore syllie people should not be plagued, and only bicause they were werie to serve the riche.[9]

The common people, greatly influenced by the Tribunes, did not appear when the Consuls called their names from the impressment lists, nor would they allow themselves to be sent out to the new colony. However, Coriolanus, now a man of stature in Rome, forced those chosen to colonize the city of Velitres to carry out their orders, but he was unable to constrain the others to go to war. He did, though, entreat certain of his followers and friends to go with him against the Antiates. He had good fortune and brought back corn, cattle and prisoners, reserving none of the spoils for himself. Those that had remained at home were ashamed enough to confer the consulship upon him, but later jealous enough to refuse it.[10] Plutarch says:

> Shortely after this, Martius stoode for the Consulshippe: and the common people favored his sute, thinking it would be a shame to them to denie, and refuse, the chiefest noble man of bloude, and most worthie persone of ROME, and specially him that had done so great service and good to the common wealth.[11]

It is at this time that Plutarch's Coriolanus goes in humble garb to the market place and actually displays his wounds to the public eye. Again, Shakespeare exer-

cises his time compression at this point in making Coriolanus, still in his suppliant's garb, first spurn the people. In Plutarch, this does not occur until the day of the election after the refusal.[12] In Plutarch, the day of Coriolanus' exposure of his wounds has passed, and election day arrived:

> But the daye of election was come, and that Martius came to the market place with great pompe, accompanied with all the Senate, and the whole Nobilitie of the cittie about him, who sought to make him Consul, with the greatest instance and intreatie they could, or ever attempted for any man or matter: then the love and good will of the common people, turned straight to an hate and envie toward him, fearing to put this office of soveraine authoritie into his handes, being a man somewhat partiall toward the nobilitie, and of great credit and authoritie amongest the Patricians, & as one they might doubt would take away alltogether the libertie from the people. Whereupon for these considerations, they refused Martius in the ende, and made two other that were suters, Consuls....but Martius tooke it in farre worse parte than the Senate, and was out of all pacience.[13]

The time compression in this instance, then clearly affects the character of Coriolanus. In Shakespeare, his irascibility is much less in need of stimulation. He rants as he descends to the market place in his humble garb, disparaging ancient custom:

> Cor. It is a part
> That I shall blush in acting, and might well
> Be taken from the people.
>
> Bru. Mark you that?
>
> Cor. To brag unto them, "Thus I did, and thus";

Show them th' unaching scars which I should
hide,
As if I had receiv'd them for the hire
Of their breath only!

Men. Do not stand upon 't.
We recommend to you, tribunes of the people,
Our purpose to them; and to our noble consul
Wish we all joy and honour.

Senators. To Coriolanus come all joy and honour!

/Florish of cornets. Exeunt all but
Sicinius and Brutus./

Bru. You see how he intends to use the people.

Sic. May they perceive's intent! He will re-
quire them
As if he did contemn what he requested
Should be in them to give.[14]

To go on with the story, in Plutarch, after Coriolanus loses the vote, expressions of sympathy from the patricians goad him into even more extreme anger. The occasion which follows gives him the opportunity to utter his bitter invective against the plebeians:

> In the meane season, there came great plenty of corne to ROME, that had bene bought, parte in ITALIE, and part was sent out of SICILE, as geven by Gelon the tyranne of SYRACUSA: so that many stoode in great hope, that the dearthe of vittells being holpen, the civill dissention would also cease. The Senate sate in counsell apon it immediatly, the common people stoode also about the palice where the counsell was kept, gaping what resolution would fall out: persuading themselves, that the corne they had bought should be solde good cheape, and that which was geven, should be devided by the polle, without paying any pennie, and the rather because certaine of the Senatours amongst them dyd so wishe and persuade the same.

> But Martius standing on his feete, dyd somewhat sharpely take up those, who went about to gratifie the people therein: & called them people pleasers, and traitours to the nobilitie. Moreover he sayed "they nourrished against them selves, the naughty seed and cockle, of insolencie and sedition, which had bene sowed & scattered amroade emongest the people whom they should have cut of, if they had bene wise, and have prevented their greatnes: and not to their owne destruction to have suffered the people, to stablishe a magistrate for them selves, of so great power and authoritie, as that man had, to whom they had graunted it.[14]

Coriolanus goes on in his lengthy invective to refer to the habitual cowardice of the plebeians in war, the growing fear of the patricians, the treachery of the Tribunes, and the growing disobedience of the mob. The Tribunes, hearing this speech, run to the people, inciting them to fury so that they are ready to fly upon the whole Senate. The Tribunes lay the whole fault upon Coriolanus and send their minions to attempt to arrest him.[15]

From this point on, the action proceeds as in Shakespeare. This is the third tumult, treated as the second by Shakespeare. Thus it may be seen that the compression of three revolts into two has rather far-reaching effects upon characterization. Shakespeare has thrown the whole emphasis upon the pride and irrascibility of Coriolanus, giving him much less reason for his outbursts, and at the same time making them contrast more sharply with the general attitude of the people. In Plutarch, Coriolanus

is much more justified in his attitude toward the people because he has already seen their fickleness both in war and in politics. In Plutarch he seems much more patient, not only because he condescends to show his wounds without ranting and raving at the mere suggestion of conformity to custom, but also because he waits longer to become aroused against the plebeians. Shakespeare leaves no doubt that Coriolanus would abuse the power of Consulship should he achieve it.

By exercising foreshortening of time, Shakespeare not only improves the story dramatically by shortening the devious turnings of political waverings and emphasizing the character of his principal, but also improves upon the characters of the Tribunes by concealing (or omitting) some of their machinations. Case expresses the opinion that though Shakespeare makes the Tribunes politically responsible for the refusal of the consulship and personally base, self-seeking, and unscrupulous, he does see to it that they put the people's just case forcibly and makes them utter home-truths to the proud patrician:

> you speak to the people
> As if you were a god to punish, and not
> A man of their infirmity.[16]

The Tribunes seem much more personal in their dislike of Coriolanus in Shakespeare than in Plutarch because of their actual prevention of his achievement of the

Consulship. In Plutarch, they do not actively inveigh against Coriolanus until much later, during the corn riots, after Coriolanus has been refused the Consulship by the people, and when in his bitterness he advocates dismissal of the Tribunes and refusal of free corn.

Shakespeare gives the people more excuse for their fickleness by making Martius refuse to show his wounds and to offer sneers for good will. On the other hand, however, the sufferings and forbearance of the people are less advanced, and justice is hardly done to their provocations, methods and moderation.[17]

The character of Menenius suffers from this compression in that it becomes less significant. Instead of addressing rather dignified secessionists on the Mons Sacer, who are actually protesting infringements upon their civic rights, he simply tells his fable to a street mob in Rome.[18] He learns only later to his surprise that the Senate has granted the people Tribunes. Shakespeare, while making Menenius more visible, reduces him to a bon vivant, thoroughly likeable, but inclined to old man's garrulousness, whom T. S. Eliot might well have been describing in these lines:

> No! am not Prince Hamlet, nor was meant to be;
> Am an attendant lord, one that will do
> To swell a progress, start a scene or two,
> Advise the prince; no doubt, an easy tool,
> Deferential, glad to be of use,
> Politic, cautious, and meticulous;

> Full of high sentence, but a bit obtuse;
> At times, indeed, almost ridiculous --
> Almost, at times, the Fool.

To press an analogy a bit further, both J. Alfred Prufrock and Menenius not only were men out of their times, but also were both impressed with their own futility.

Mr. Case repudiates the contention of Dr. Brandes that Shakespeare ignores "'every incident which sheds a favorable light upon the plebeians,'" stating that had Shakespeare's sympathy been wholly with Coriolanus, he would not have made any part of his conduct odious. Mr. Case states that Shakespeare was too sensible of the "humorous possibilities of the outraged sense to be turned into a misanthrope, or of being made 'incapable of seeing them /the people/ as an exaggeration of separate individualities,' as Dr. Brandes will have it," and that it would be better to agree with Mr. Stopford Brooke, who says: "'We are made to feel, moving like a spirit through the play, the sympathy of Shakespeare with the struggle of the people,'" than to misread Coriolanus, believing that Shakespeare could or would not see the people's rights, their good side, or even their individual good sense. "The people expels by fair and foul means, a declared enemy whom sane aristocracy cannot control, and even Menenius admits that in the event all is well (IV.vi.). That Coriolanus subverts this condition by re-

sorting to foul means himself does not change the fact."[19]

In this play there are two examples of time extension, rather than compression. One is the appearance in Act IV, Scene iv, of a Roman traitor and a Volsce upon a highway between Rome and Antium. The ensuing conversation does little to shed any light upon the characterization, but it does bring into relief the desperate situation in Rome after the expulsion of Coriolanus and the impending attack of Aufidius. The second example is the first appearance of Aufidius. In Plutarch, he first appears when Coriolanus seeks him out in order to offer his services against Rome. In Shakespeare he appears first in Act I, Scene viii, in which he and Martius fight, all the time expressing their hatred for each other. Aufidius appears again in the same act, Scene x. In this scene he renews his resolution to have at Martius another time. The effect is rather weak, serving only to contrast former hate with present friendliness when Coriolanus does arrive at Antium with his proposal. Aufidius, as well as Coriolanus, seems capable of swift change from blood-lusty hate to utmost compatibility when a common end presents itself. The contrast makes both men seem extremely unscrupulous and heightens the effect of the traitorousness of Coriolanus and the unscrupulousness of Aufidius. Also the depth to which Coriolanus will stoop to assuage

the pain stemming from his wounded pride and arrogance seems deeper somehow, when one views him in friendliest company with the erstwhile enemy he fought in hand-to-hand combat but a few days since.

Another omission made by Shakespeare definitely affects the character of Volumnia. In Plutarch, the idea of Volumnia's petition of Coriolanus is Valeria's. Valeria, the sister of the great Publicola, whom Plutarch represents as a most honored and reverenced lady, in company of other Roman ladies, is praying for the good of the state in the temple of Jupiter Capitolin, when she is seized with a divine inspiration that Volumnia would be the most fitting of all Romans to go to plead with Coriolanus, both because of her hitherto manifest power over her son and because she, not having been harmed because of her son's defection, is living proof of the good will and penitence of the Romans. Gathering her fellow-worshippers about her, Valeria goes straight to the house of Volumnia, and finding her in the company of Coriolanus' wife and children, proceeds to outline her proposed course of action, couched in nobly appealing language certain to capture the approval of the Roman matron who is the epitome of domestic and civic pride. Volumnia, after some self-commiseration, acquiesces to the proposal.[20]

In Shakespeare, Cominius mentions in his despair of

the success of Menenius in reasoning with Coriolanus that he has heard that his noble mother and wife intend to solicit him for the mercy of his country.[21] Thus the weight of initiative is Volumnia's, giving her the stature Shakespeare desired. Simply by omission of the scene, Shakespeare has eliminated any detraction from her strength. Shakespeare's Volumnia is a far more prominent character than Plutarch's, and the foregoing is one of the reasons. The omission of her somewhat maudlin reply to Valeria is inspired because it would certainly weaken the stoic indifference to personal suffering which is so intrinsic a facet of the character of Shakespeare's heroine.

The actual carrying out of his revenge upon the Romans Coriolanus does not find so easy in Plutarch as in Shakespeare. In Plutarch, the Volsces are reluctant to break a two-year truce with Rome. Coriolanus and Aufidius are unable to put their plans of attack into action until the Romans expel Volscian citizens from Rome. This event is left out by Shakespeare. Plutarch writes:

> For on a holy daye common playes being kept in ROME, apon some suspition, or false reporte, they made proclamation by sound of trumpet, that all the VOLSCES whould avoyde out of ROME before sunne set. Some thincke this was a crafte & deceipt of Martius, who sent one to ROME to the Consuls, to accuse the VOLSCES falsely, advertising them howe they had made a conspiracie to set apon them, whilest they were busie in seeing these games, and also to set their cittie a fyre. This open

> proclamation made all the VOLSCES more offended with the ROMAINES, then ever they were before: and Tullus agraviting the matter, dyd so inflame the VOLSCES against them, that in the ende they sent their ambassadours to ROME to summone them to deliver their landes and townes again, which they had taken from them in times past, or to looke for present warres.[22]

In Shakespeare, the Volsces have been prepared for some time, as Aufidius tells Coriolanus when he first welcomes him to his home:

> O, come, go in,
> And take our friendly senators by the hands:
> Who now are here, taking their leaves of me,
> Who am prepared against your territories,
> Though not for Rome itself.[23]

During the feast there is every indication that the Volsces and Coriolanus have come to a quick agreement, especially when one of the servants says:

> Tomorrow; today; presently; you shall have the drum struck up this afternoon. 'Tis, as it were, a parcel to their feast, and to be executed ere they wipe their lips.[24]

This particular example of time compression is not greatly significant in itself, unless perhaps to hide one of the connivings of Coriolanus actually only hinted at by Plutarch. However, when the above incident is coupled with the waverings of the Romans throughout the whole threat of total war, a not so subtle change is wrought upon their general temper.

In Plutarch, the Romans answer the challenge of the Volsces in the following manner:

> The ROMAINES hearing this, were marvelously netled: and made no other aunswer but thus. If the VOLSCES be the first that beginne warre: the ROMAINES will be the last that will ende it.[25]

However, they do nothing more than answer bravely, and the Volsces, under Coriolanus, begin making inroads on the Roman provinces without fear of retribution. MacCallum sums up the action of the Volsces thus:

> Still the Romans do not take any precautions. In a second campaign he gets within five miles of the city, and still they do nothing but send an embassage. Even when, at the peril of his popularity, he grants them a truce of thirty days, they make no use of it for defence, but only continue to transmit arrogant or abject messages. This further opportunity, too, which they so strangely neglect, is wisely omitted by Shakespeare. With him the irruption is swift and sudden beyond the grasp of human thought. Coriolanus breaks across the border and strikes straight for Rome. There is no time for defensive measures, no possibility of aid. Even so, the part the Romans play is not so heroic as might be expected, but it is at least intelligible and much less dastardly than in the history.[26]

MacCallum notes that this thirty-day truce is the beginning of the dissatisfaction of Aufidius and his countrymen with the actions of Coriolanus. Because of the omission of this incident in Shakespeare, the character of Aufidius suffers because his enmity takes on a much more personal character.

> For in Plutarch the truce of thirty days which Coriolanus grants Rome is the original occasion of the movement against him in which other Volscians besides Aufidius share; and this

> movement culminates only after he has conceded peace on conditions which even Plutarch considers unfair to his employers. But in the play, as we have seen, the truce is omitted, and Tullus has determined on the destruction of his supplanter even at a time when he confidently expects that Rome cannot save herself:
>
> When, Caius, Rome is thine,
> Thou art poor'st of all: then shortly thou art mine.
>
> (IV.vii.56)
>
> Thus the last shred of Public spirit is torn away from his selfish ambition and spite.[27]

This shift in the character of Aufidius sheds a rather flattering light upon the character of Coriolanus. According to MacCallum, in contrast with all of Aufidius' lust for precedence and vainglorious egotism, one cannot but feel that Coriolanus is striving for the reality of honor.[28] Even though Coriolanus through his own misdirection destroys himself in his search for this honor, in view of the abstract ideal, he is the more selfless, the more noble of the two. The truce in Plutarch weakens the character of Coriolanus in that he shows the Roman's forbearance sometime before the appeal of his mother. In Shakespeare, his family is the only force with power to move him to this sentiment.[29]

Another instance of time compression, also noted by MacCallum,[30] actually amounts to the omission of another of the tactics of Coriolanus. In Plutarch, Coriolanus, during his raids on the territories of Rome, spares the property of the patricians, while destroying that of the

plebeians, in order to stir up greater dissension between the two factions of Rome and play upon the old suspicions of the plebeians.

> For his chiefest purpose was, to increase still the malice and dissention betweene the nobilitie, and the communaltie: and to drawe that on, he was very carefull to keepe the noble mens landes and goods safe from harme and burning, but spoyled all the whole countrie besides, and would suffer no man to take or hurte anything of the noble mens. This made greater sturre and broyle betweene the nobilitie and people, than was before. For the noble men fell out with the people, bicause they had so unjustly banished a man of so great valure and power. The people on the other side accused the nobilitie, how they had procured Martius to make these warres, to be revenged of them: bicause it pleased them to see their goodes burnt and spoyled before their eyes, whilest themselves were well at ease, and dyd behold the peoples losses and misfortunes, and knowing their owne goodes safe and out of daunger: and how the war was not made against the noble men, that had the enemie abroad, to keepe that they had in safety.[31]

There is no mention of this strategy on the part of Coriolanus in the drama. Even though Menenius and other patricians berate the people for their stupidity, there is no quarreling between the two factions because of partiality on the part of the enemy. All of the Romans appear in a far more flattering light because their energies are bent upon the saving of Rome and not upon anything less important. Their interests in the play are identical, love of country being uppermost in their minds. In the hands of Shakespeare, therefore, the people are more dignified and

noble. The effect upon Coriolanus is more obvious. In Shakespeare, because of the compression of time his rage is indiscriminately bestowed upon all Romans alike. He has no power of craft or guile when his wounded pride calls for redress. Again the emphasis is upon his terrible flaw.

MacCallum remarks upon another omission brought about by compression of time, and that is the deliberation of the Senate as to the revocation of Coriolanus' sentence of exile, while he is literally knocking at the very gates of the city.[32] They cannot agree even upon this until the very panic of the plebeians forces them to reconsider and vote for calling him home. In Shakespeare, "Only when peace is concluded does his recall follow quite naturally, as an act of gratitude, in the burst of jubilant relief. This, too, is one of the indications of Shakespeare's feeling for Roman greatness, that we should bear in mind when elsewhere he seems to show less sense even than Plutarch of her civic virtue."[33]

At the end of the play there is one last instance of time compression worthy of note. This is the compression which involves the omission of the council called by the Volsces, as a result of the urging of Aufidius. Aufidius, having grown jealous of Coriolanus' precedence in command over him, takes advantage of

Coriolanus' capitulation to his mother, inspiring his people to open resentment of the truce with the Romans which Coriolanus has effected in place of utter conquest. A council is called in order that Coriolanus might speak his defense against the accusations of Aufidius. Coriolanus agrees, in Plutarch, to abide by whatever decision the council makes. Promising to give up all of his commands if the people so desire, he cannot refuse to give an account of his actions to the people. The council is then called, and the action is as follows in Plutarch:

> The people hereupon called a common counsaill, in which assembly there were certen oratours appointed, that stirred up the common people against him: and when they had tolde their tales, Martius rose up to make them answer. Now, notwithstanding the mutinous people made a marvelous great noyse, yet when they sawe him, for the reverence they bare unto his valliantnes, they quieted them selves, and gave still audience to aledge with leysure what he could for his purgation. Moreover, the honestest men of the ANTIATES, and who most rejoyced in peace, shewed by their countenaunce that they would heare him willingly, and judge also according to their conscience. Whereupon Tullus fearing that if he dyd let him speake, he would prove his innocencie to the people, bicause emongest other things he had an eloquent tongue, besides that the first good service he had done to the people of the VOLSCES, dyd winne him mor favour, then these last accusations could purchase him displeasure: & furthermore, the offence they layed to his charge, was a testimonie of the good will they ought him, for they would never have thought he had done them wrong for that they tooke not the cittie of ROME, if they had not bene very neere taking of it, by meanes of his

> approche and conduction. For these causes Tullus thought he might no longer delaye his pretence and enterprise, neither to tarie for the mutining and rising of the common people against him: wherefore, those that were of the conspiracie, beganne to crie out that he was not to be heard, nor that they would not suffer a traytour to usurpe tyrannicall power over the tribe of the VOLSCES, who would not yeld up his estate and authoritie. And in saying these wordes, they all fell upon him, and killed him in the market place, none of the people once offering to rescue him. Howbeit it is a clere case, that this murder was not generally consented unto, of the most parte of the VOLSCES, for men came out of all partes to honour his bodie, and dyd honorably burie him, setting out his tombe with great store of armour and spoyles, as the tombe of a worthie persone and great captaine.[34]

In the play, the idea of the formal council and proceedings is actually omitted. Coriolanus enters the city with the report in his hand, approaching the lords of the city, among whom are mingled the conspirators of Aufidius; Aufidius greets him with appellation of traitor, and in the resulting altercation calls Coriolanus "boy of tears," referring to his capitulation to his mother.[35] Because of the omission of the gathering of a formal council, the whole affair takes on the aspect of a street brawl. The dignity to be found in the assassination of Julius Caesar is missing. The effect, of course, is that Coriolanus, in Shakespeare, is not confined by parliamentary procedure, and therefore he is permitted to give free rein to his tongue, venting upon all about him the

stinging resentment he feels when Aufidius calls him "boy." He will not be quelled. He rants as once he did in Rome.

The emphasis is shifted from his accounting in Plutarch to his pettish resentment over a trivial name-calling in Shakespeare. In his extremity he shouts, "Alone I did it," and invites the multitude to slay him, crying out upon the ingratitude of the people in much the same manner as he did in Rome. However, this time he has gone too far, and Aufidius, taking advantage of his madness, calls upon the mob to slay the braggart, in spite of the attempts of the lords to intervene. Thus, again, the weight of the responsibility of the principal is added to. Coriolanus' death is due solely to his tragic flaw. Had he been able to hold his tongue for once, he might have lived, just as he might have escaped the sentence of exile from Rome previously had it not been for his damnable flaw. In Plutarch he is killed before he has a chance to speak.

The greatest effect of time compression in this play is upon Coriolanus, increasing his irrascibility, at the same time rendering the venting of it less descriminate, to the point where it is out of proportion with his provocations. The flaw in his character thus increased precipitates his downfall, outstripping the importance of the somewhat adverse fortune glimpsed in

Plutarch. The emphasis of the flaw is undistracted. Menenius becomes less significant, degenerating from a dignified emissary addressing a calm deliberative group of representatives of the misused plebeians to an impotent old man telling a fable to an angry mob shouting for mere corn. Aufidius is villified by time extension, a rarity indicative of Shakespeare's evident desire to demean his character; he is strikingly able to make an immediate about-face from hate to love for his former enemy, as is Coriolanus, and therefore most unscrupulous. His final hate for Coriolanus becomes much more personal in nature, degenerating into pure jealousy, without civic considerations. Volumnia becomes stronger, with more initiative, while Valeria, because of the time compression which eliminates her initiative, becomes weaker. Shakespeare's Volumnia expresses only a modicum of the self-commiseration characteristic of Plutarch's matron, emerging as the stoically indifferent symbol of Roman pride and strength.

The Roman people in general both benefit and suffer from time compression. While they have more excuse for their fickleness toward Martius, their sufferings and patience are less advanced, and their legitimate protests degenerate into mob violence. However, their failure to prepare for seige and inability to determine

upon a unified course of action under seige are greatly diminished in Shakespeare. The Volsces also suffer in Shakespeare, because of the foreshortening of time. They are much less honorable because all mention of their hesitancy to break the truce between the two cities is eliminated, and the mere appearance of Coriolanus is enough to stimulate them into military action. They are ready to turn upon Coriolanus with less provocation; there is no parliament.

Again, the all-over effect of the time compression in this play is to pin-point the most dramatically sound characteristics of the principals, increasing the color and strength of faults and virtues. The effect is that of a clearer focus, sharpening the outlines of the figures, enabling them to stand out more clearly against the backdrop of historical action.

CONCLUSIONS

As most students of literature will readily aver, there are only a few basic plots available to writers, and therefore the quality we refer to as "genius" is manifested not by originality of plot but by its variation in the hands of the artist. The same thing is true of characterization. From basic types of characters a writer selects various traits and combines them to form the creatures who are to carry on the action of his plots. Whether these characters are merely automatons or living, breathing people depends upon the genius of the author producing them. Shakespeare's success in the latter is evidenced by the fact that his versions of the basic characters he used continue to be the definitive ones, greatly overshadowing his models, with which students of today are acquainted chiefly because of their use by Shakespeare. Indeed, the lasting quality of his improvements is an index to his stature as a dramatist.

In a study of Shakespeare, investigation of his sources need not be for the purpose of deciding upon his originality, because, as has been pointed out above, originality is not of primary importance. Of far more importance are his <u>methods</u> of variation and adaptation to the dramatic medium. This study has been concerned

with Shakespeare's sources only in relation to tracing his remolding of the characters by means of time compression to suit his medium of art. By comparing Shakespeare's finished products, after their passage through the crucible of time compression, with their counterparts in his sources, it is possible to measure the extent of their metamorphoses. While in some cases the transformations due to time compression have been slight, the fact that in other cases the transformations have been almost entirely due to this device indicates that there can be no doubt that Shakespeare's use of the device was intentional, and certainly inspired, particularly when one considers the tragedies discussed in this paper.

Before being touched by time compression, Romeo and Juliet were the shadowy hero and heroine of a long narrative poem by Brooke, wailing and languishing their ways through protracted misfortunes to their foreshadowed fate. There is nothing spontaneous in either character and hardly anything youthful. In Shakespeare's hands they came alive, actually sparkling in their impetuousness and youth. They act quickly without fear and appear fresher and withal more virginal because of their lack of experience. The Friar is freed from the garrulousness of his counterpart in Brooke simply because there is no time for this trait in Shakespeare. He becomes more selfless

and less conniving. The Nurse steps into the crucible hardly more than a shadow and emerges as a roguish and useful person. Capulet becomes more vividly cruel and provides, by contrast with the lovers, more sympathy for them.

Julius Caesar looms larger, more noble after the touch of time compression, and his fall the more terrible. Mark Antony sheds some of the meaner aspects of his historical counterpart. He becomes impulsive, forward-looking, selfless, the avenger of Caesar's murder. Brutus becomes signally more tragic, alone, misguidedly impetuous, the dupe of a Cassius far less civic-minded than the Cassius of Plutarch. Octavius becomes the representative of legal right, joined with Antony in the noble vengeance.

Antony and Cleopatra step from the pages of history into the crucible of time compression, a middle-aged pair with separate families and divided loyalties, dragging behind them numerous failings and faults. They emerge shorn of all interests other than their grand passion for one another, the grand passion which is the ultimate ruin of both, but the flame of which burns brighter because of the newly-conceived nobility and queenliness of its possessors. Octavius and Octavia become less vivid, providing contrast with the more

elevated struggle of the principals.

Coriolanus emerges more intensely irascible, less discriminating in venting his spleen, sweeping away all before him in his endeavor to ease his aching pride, and sinking deeper in the mire of treachery. Volumnia arises the indisputable symbol of Roman matronhood, dwarfing all about her; the minor characters are diminished still more, providing added contrast to the principals. Aufidius becomes more selfish and jealous of personal gain, himself the rule by which the depth of the fall of Coriolanus may be judged.

All in all, there does not seem to be much difference in the extent and purpose to which Shakespeare employed time compression in the various tragedies. In all, the result is approximately the same, intensification of traits of characters and the addition to the dramatic stature of the principals.

Not only has this study proved the hypothesis of the direct relationship between Shakespeare's characters and his deliberate use of time compression as a means of adapting the characters of his sources, but it has also pointed out Shakespeare's cognizance of the necessity to foreshorten time to achieve dramatic action: Shakespeare portrayed artistic figures which would have been impossible had he followed the exact templet of his predeces-

sors. Accordingly, this study has been designed to reveal the nature of the thaumaturgy which Shakespeare realized through his dramatic sense which did not allow for mere photographic reproduction; and as a consequence he developed, half out of necessity and half out of artistic instinct, characters into which he breathed life. Had Shakespeare not felt the compulsion to crystallize his sources into dramatic form, these characters might have remained within their limited milieus. His awareness of drama as a reflection of life, and its consequent brevity, imposed upon him the restriction which he had to observe to portray life dramatically rather than rhetorically.

It is hoped that this study has somewhat clarified the nature of the crucible into which Shakespeare dipped the tapestry of history and legend before wringing from it the grime of antiquity and displaying the brilliantly vivified characters suited to the uses they were to serve in his tragedies.

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